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TARBELL'S TEACHERS GUIDE

TO THE

TERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

FOR 1907

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MOSES AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—*Tissot*

TARBELL'S TEACHERS' GUIDE

TO THE
INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS
FOR 1907

MARTHA TARBELL, PH. D.

Hurst Memorial Library
Pacific Christian College
Long Beach, Calif.

The Bible Text. Words and Phrases Explained. Suggestive Thoughts from Helpful Writers. Light from Oriental Life.

Suggestions for Teaching the Lesson. Three Lesson Thoughts with Illustrations. Sentence Sermons. The Bible Its Own Interpreter.

The Personal Thought. The Lesson Story. Subjects for Bible Class Discussion. Work to be Assigned. Intervening Events.

An Analysis of the First Nine Books of the Bible. The Geography of the Old Testament World, Egypt, Sinai Peninsula and Palestine. Maps, Diagrams, Reproductions of Ancient Mural Decorations and Paintings by Doré, Tissot and Other Modern Artists.

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(From the International Sunday-School Lesson Committee)

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II. The Beginnings of God's Chosen People. 1st Quarter, Lesson 6 to 2d Quarter, Lesson 6.

III. The Beginnings of the Hebrew Nation.

1. Bondage and Deliverance. 2d Quarter, Lesson 7 to 3d Quarter, Lesson 1.
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TARBELL'S TEACHERS' GUIDE

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS

The Lesson Preparation. The confidence and earnestness and enthusiasm with which a teacher presents a lesson is dependent on his preparation of that lesson. Unused knowledge is not useless knowledge. There is as great a difference between the effectiveness of a teacher who has just enough knowledge to last through the lesson period and the one who is full of his subject as there is between the effectiveness of a battery that is charged just enough to keep the electric current from stopping and another battery that is charged to its fullest capacity.

The Archbishop of York says there are three kinds of preachers: the preacher you can't listen to, the preacher you can listen to, and the preacher you can't help listening to. This is a good classification of teachers as well. The teacher who has not prepared the lesson at all is the one you can't listen to; the teacher-with-just-enough-knowledge-for-the-lesson-period is the teacher you can listen to; but the teacher who is thoroughly interested in the lesson himself, who has studied it from all points of view, and who has acquired a large fund of information in regard to its historical and geographical setting, its connection with other events, the light thrown on it by the life and customs of the East, the words of great thinkers that bear upon it, the truths which the lesson teaches and the stories which aptly illustrate those truths, that one is the teacher you can't help listening to. Since few teachers have the time or the opportunity to forage for themselves in many fields of information, this book has been written that they may find within its covers the general knowledge and the results of special research necessary to a full understanding and wise presentation of each lesson.

The Lesson Plan. The lesson period is brief, and you will not have time to teach all that you would like to teach. Every moment must be wisely used. The material offered for each lesson is given for classes of all ages and degrees of advancement, and your personal knowledge of your pupils, their interests and needs, will guide you in your selection. To avoid indefinite, aimless teaching, teaching that is "without form and void," write out your plan for each lesson. Under each heading make a note of what you will say, and review your plan till you have it well in mind. It is wise, also, to decide in advance what knowledge you must impart to your pupils and what by wise questioning you can lead them to tell you. In every possible way lead your pupils to think and talk about the lesson. A teacher's joy should be like that of Socrates who was happy when he could see that an idea had been born in a mind because of a question he had asked.

The Geography of the Lesson. "The men and women whom I knew first and best were those of the Hebrew world," said Frances E. Willard. "Sitting before the nursery fire, while the streets of the little English town were choked with drifts, I could see the camels of the Ishmaelitish merchants passing through the hot, sandy desert. I could see Hagar weeping under the palm, could see the waters of the Red Sea standing up like a wall; Miriam clashing the timbrels and Deborah singing under the oak and Ruth gleaning in

the fields of Bethlehem." To make the men and women of the Hebrew world real to your scholars is an important part of your work with this year's lessons. In no better way can a vivid sense of their reality be gained than through a knowledge of the lands where they lived and of the times in which they lived. The treatment in the first chapter of this book of the geography and history has been made quite full that the geographical and historical setting of the lessons may be made both interesting and real to pupils. In connection with each lesson references are given to the paragraphs of the geography which directly bear upon that lesson, and other paragraphs are also assigned so that in the course of the year the entire chapter may be learned.

Words and Phrases Explained. The writer's aim has been to make the explanations of the text as concise and clear as possible, and to give only such explanations as actually explain. While the text given in the book is that of the Authorized Version, every change made in the American Revised Version is given, and in this way the helpfulness of the New Version in making clear the meaning is fully shown.

Suggestive Thoughts from Helpful Writers. The quotations from noted preachers, teachers, essayists, and poets can not fail to lead the teacher's thoughts into broad and thoughtful and helpful realms.

Light from Oriental Life. After Canon Tristram had preached a sermon in Ceylon about Christ the Good Shepherd his interpreter told him that, as there were no sheep in Ceylon and the natives had never seen one, he had turned the sheep into a buffalo that had lost its calf and gone into the jungle to find it. Because there are many references in the Bible as unfamiliar to us as Occidentals as the reference to sheep was to the people of Ceylon, whatever light may be thrown on the lessons from the habits of life and thought of the people to whom the words of the Bible were first addressed, has been given in this book.

The Approach to the Lesson. A popular novelist has said that the secret of writing a good novel consists in seizing the attention of the reader in the first paragraph and in keeping fast hold of it right through. Many an excellent Sunday-school teacher has failed with his class simply because of his custom of beginning the lesson in so lame or stumbling a way as to give his pupils the impression that he did not know what to say. Let it be your aim to seize the attention of your pupils with your first words. Vary your manner of introducing the lesson from week to week. Two suggestions for beginning the lesson are given in this book with each lesson, one designed for younger pupils and the other for older ones. Sometimes a bright review of the last lesson, an interesting account of the events intervening between the last lesson and the one for the day, or some unexpected question which arouses the thoughts and words of your pupils, will prove the best introduction.

Lesson Thoughts and Illustrations. The teacher who teaches the lesson verse by verse, pointing out all the lessons he can from one verse and then taking up the next verse, will fail to impart a knowledge of the lesson as a whole and will leave in the scholars' minds only a hazy impression of many disconnected thoughts. One of the serious defects of Sunday-school teaching is that it is without definite object. To impress one great truth should be your aim each Sunday; that truth should be made the nucleus of your lesson plan, and toward it all your teaching should be directed. Three lesson truths are developed and illustrated in connection with each lesson. In some lessons

all three topics are equally suitable for all classes, while the illustrations are graded for different classes, but usually one topic is suitable for older classes and another topic for younger classes.

Not only will an illustration, which is concrete, be retained in the memory while a statement, which is abstract, is forgotten, but a wisely chosen illustration from history or literature or the world around us will show young people that religion and life are related in a way that nothing else can.

"Do you tell the story now in offhand style, straight from the book?" you may ask, and Browning answers:

> "Yes, and no.
> From the book, yes; thence bit by bit I dug
> The lingot truth. But
> Something of mine mixed with the mass
> Made it bear hammer and be firm to file."

Something of your own should go with the story, which needs to be studied like any other part of the lesson till you are sure that you can tell it interestingly and well, and till you have acquired that eloquence which Emerson says is but "the power to translate a truth into language perfectly intelligible to the person to whom you speak."

Sentence Sermons. These bright, pointed ways of putting truths which the lesson teaches are enjoyed by young and old alike, and are easily remembered. Before the lesson period let one of your pupils copy on the blackboard or on a large square of blackboard cloth or pad of paper the sentences which are especially adapted to your class. Encourage pupils to keep a note book in which they write the sentences you have thus given them.

The Bible its Own Interpreter. Like the Sentence Sermons, some of the Golden Texts may be written on the board, or they may be given to pupils the week before to be found and memorized.

A Personal Thought. The Sunday-school is the school of character. Its aim is to make Christian scholars. Its lessons should be so taught as to prepare its members for noble living. One practical, personal application of the lesson is suggested each week, but the teacher must put his own personality back of the moral or spiritual application. There is no lesson which does not bring with it some word that will show pupils their own responsibility for the lives they lead, some revelation of God's will for them, some word of courage or inspiration, some special spiritual message which they need.

The Lesson Story. Not only the verses selected for the day's lesson, but also enough of those which come before and after are retold so as to give a complete story. Teachers of younger classes need to see the lesson pictures clearly so as to reproduce them accurately and interestingly. Teachers of older classes will find it helpful briefly to review the lesson at the close and bring out in relief the lesson truth which has been made the central point of the teaching. The close, like all other parts of the lesson, should be carefully prepared and never left to chance.

Subjects for Bible Class Discussion. Not the selected verses alone but the chapters given to be read should be the basis of Bible Class lessons. The aim of the teaching should be to impart broad, general truths; the spirit rather than the letter of the Old Testament should be the theme. Two or three special topics suggested by the lesson text are given for class discussion in the

second half of the lesson period. The one chosen should be announced in class a week in advance that all may come prepared to take part in the discussion.

Work to be Assigned for the Next Lesson. Expect home study on the part of your pupils. Give them some definite work to do each week and they will do it. The questions given in this book are designed to familiarize pupils with the use of the Bible and to lead them to think about the lesson. From your knowledge of your pupils you can add other suitable questions. It is a good plan to write the questions on separate slips of paper, two or three on each slip, and give them to different pupils. Do not forget to call for the answers the following Sunday.

Between the Lessons. The omitted chapters between the lessons are in most cases so long, and contain so much that is of minor importance or is difficult for young scholars to understand, that most teachers will find it wiser to tell their pupils the connection between lessons than to ask them to study the intervening events. In the two paragraphs of the Lesson Story and the Events between the Lessons, and again more briefly in the quarterly reviews, are given all the important facts of the first nine books of the Bible, from which the year's lessons are taken.

THE FIRST NINE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The Pentateuch. The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch, from a Greek word meaning the Five-volumed Book; these books were originally written on a single scroll of parchment. The Jewish rabbis called the Pentateuch the five-fifths of the Law. The term Hexateuch (Six-volumed Book) is often used to include also the book of Joshua. The six books give a complete history of Israel from the call of Moses to the settlement in Canaan.

Genesis. The name of the first book is a Greek word meaning creation, origin. Genesis contains an account of the origin of the world, the origin of the divine religion, and the origin of the nation chosen to be its guardian. It shows how God began to reveal Himself to mankind. "Genesis is a book in which we see sprouts, buds, and leaves, and here and there fruit, but small and immature. It contains those ideas of God and man, of righteousness and judgment, of responsibility and moral government, of failure and hope, which are presupposed through the rest of the Old Testament, and which prepare the way for the mission of Christ."

In the outline of the book there are two main divisions: in the first the interest centers around events; in the second, around persons. Each subdivision save the first is introduced with the words, "These are the generations of."

I. Primeval Period. Gen. 1–11.26.
1. Generations of the heavens and the earth. 1–4.
2. Generations of Adam. 5.1–6.8.
3. Generations of Noah. 6.9–9.29.
4. Generations of the sons of Noah. 10.1–11.9.
5. Generations of Shem. 11.10–26.

II. The Patriarchal Period. 11.27–50.26.
1. Generations of Tereh. 11.27–25.11.
2. Generations of Ishmael. 25.12–18.
3. Generations of Isaac. 25.19–35.29.
4. Generations of Esau. 36.1–37.1.
5. Generations of Jacob. 37.2–50.26.

Exodus. Genesis has given the history of individuals; Exodus takes up the story of the chosen family and shows how it became a great nation, organized under leaders, with a code of laws, and a fixed form of worship, "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." The word Exodus is from the Greek, and means "The Going Out." Exodus records the preparation of the children of Israel for their departure from Egypt under Moses, and their journeying to Sinai, where they received the law and constructed the Tabernacle.

I. Israel in Egypt. 1–13.
1. Increase of Israel; birth and training of Moses. 1 and 2.
2. The call of Moses. 3.1–4.27.
3. The contest with Pharaoh. 4.28–12.51.

II. From Egypt to Sinai. 13–19.
1. The institution of the Passover. 12.1–13.16.
2. The journey to the Red Sea and the crossing. 13.17–15.21.
3. From the Red Sea to Sinai. 15.22–18.27.

III. At Sinai. 19–40.
1. The Decalogue. 19.1–20.21.
2. Various laws and ordinances. 20.22–24.11.
3. Directions for making the Tabernacle and consecrating the priests. 24.12–31.18.
4. Sin of Israel and covenant with God. 32–34.
5. Construction and consecration of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. 35–40.

Leviticus. Leviticus is the book of the priestly things, and since the sons of Levi were the priests, the book has received the name of Leviticus. All is symbolical. "Many persons," says Doctor Cuyler, "pass by Leviticus as a mere upholstery shop of priestly robes and Jewish ritualities. But to him who can discern the things of the spirit, the book is full of most rich and rare instructiveness. It typifies the Christian life most wonderfully." The purpose of the book, as a German writer has stated, is to give the code regulating the spiritual life of Israel, viewed as the people of God. The laws given are civil, moral, religious, ceremonial, and sanitary. Instructions in regard to the services of the sanctuary occupy a large part of the book. The only narrative portions are the accounts of the consecrations of the priests and the death of Nadab and Abihu and the punishment of blasphemers.

I. Laws respecting sacrifice. 1–7.
II. The consecration of the priests. 8-10.
III. Laws defining clean and unclean. 11–15.
IV. The Day of Atonement. 16.
V. The laws of holiness. 17–26.
VI. Vows and tithes. 27.

Numbers. Because in the fourth book the two numberings or censuses at Sinai and at Moab are recorded, it has been called Numbers. The book is a history of the Israelites from the second year after leaving Egypt till their encampment on the east of the Jordan, and covers a period of about thirty-eight years.

I. The preparation for the march from Sinai. Nineteen days. 1.1–10.10.
1. The number and arrangement of each tribe, and the charge of the Levites. 1–4.
2. Special laws. 5–6.
3. Offerings at the dedication of the Tabernacle; the consecration of the Levites; the keeping of the Passover commanded. 7.1–9.14.
4. The signals for the journeys. 9.15–10.10.

II. From Sinai to Moab. Thirty-eight years. 10.11–22.1.
1. From Sinai to Kadesh. 10.10–14.45.
2. Kadesh as headquarters. 15.1–20.20.
3. From Kadesh to Moab. 20.21–21.35.

III. East of the Jordan. Five months. 22–36.
1. Israel and the Moabites and Midianites. 22–25.
2. A second numbering and the appointment of Joshua. 26, 27.

3. Feasts and offerings and vows. 28–30.
4. Victory over the Midianites and division of the territory. 31, 32.
5. Review of journeys. 33.1–49.
6. Directions to be observed in Canaan. 33.50–36.13.

Deuteronomy. The word Deuteronomy means the Second Law, the second giving of the law, or the repetition of the law, this time to a new generation that was not at Sinai. The period covered by the book is the last month spent by the Israelites on the plains of Moab just before entering Canaan. It records chiefly the three discourses of Moses to his people, in which he declares the holiness of the Lord and their debt of gratitude and obedience to Him. Very earnest and impressive are his exhortations to believe in God as the one only God, a God of love rather than of law, to avoid the great danger of falling into idolatry, and to remember that they are chosen to be "a holy people." The words of the nineteenth verse of the thirtieth chapter show the purpose of the book: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

I. The first discourse. 1–4.
1. Review of life on the way to Canaan. 1–3.
2. Exhortation to obedience; appointment of the cities of refuge. 4.

II. The second discourse. 5–26.
1. The Ten Commandments and an exhortation to obedience. 5–11.
2. Special laws. 12–26.
3. The blessings and cursings. 27, 28.

III. The third discourse. 29, 30.

IV. Conclusion. 31–34.
1. The charge to Joshua. 31.
2. The song of Moses. 32.
3. The blessing of Moses. 33.
4. The circumstances of Moses' death. 34.

Joshua. The book is named from Israel's second great leader. It narrates the conquest of Canaan, during a period of about twenty-five years. It is the continuation and completion of the Pentateuch, showing that God is a covenant-keeping God; His word to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is fulfilled in the settlement of their descendants in the Promised Land.

I. Introduction: Joshua's appointment and first order. 1.
II. The conquest of Canaan in three great campaigns. 2–12.
III. The division of the land. 13–22.
IV. Conclusion: Joshua's farewell. 23–24.

Judges. The book of Judges narrates the history of the Israelites from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson, and covers a period of three or four centuries. It was a time when "there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Under Moses and Joshua the tribes had been held together by their great leaders and their common interests, but after the settlement in Canaan each tribe seems to have been concerned chiefly with its own interests. The enemies from within and without the borders were met by the judges, "impromptu warriors raised up from time to time by the divine Providence to maintain Israel's independence, and subsequently called to the helm of the state (rather, of the separate tribes) by the popular voice." The book of Judges gives a series of historical sketches,

and this is their common outline: "And the children of Israel did that which was evil again in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim, and the Lord delivered them into the hands of their enemies. . . . And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and the Lord raised up to them a deliverer."

I. Introduction: the condition of the country at the opening of the period. 1.1–3.6.

II. The period of the Judges. 3.7–16.31.

III. An appendix. 17–20.

Ruth. The events of the book of Ruth were enacted "in the days when the Judges ruled." It describes the pastoral life among the Hebrews, and "has an office in the Bible," says Armstrong Black, "not unlike that which God has given the flowers in the world of nature; it softens, it sweetens, it soothes."

Chapter 1. The exile, bereavement, and return of Naomi to Bethlehem accompanied by Ruth, her daughter-in-law.

Chapter 2. Ruth gleans in the fields of Boaz, a rich kinsman of Elimelech.

Chapter 3. The fulfillment by Boaz of the duties of goël, or redeemer of the inheritance of the dead Elimelech.

Chapter 4. The marriage of Ruth and Boaz, and the birth of their grandson David.

1 Samuel. Because the rolls on which the Greek and Latin versions of the Scriptures were written were limited in length, the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles were divided in these translations, and their divisions have been retained in the English versions. The two books of Samuel cover a period of about one hundred years, and narrate the history of the transition period from the tribal government to the monarchy under David. Because Samuel is the leading character in the early chapters, his name has been given to the books. At Samuel's death forty years before the history of the books closes, the Israelites had been transformed from a collection of tribes warring and plundering and given to idolatry to a nation feared by its enemies and firmly established in the divine religion.

I. The early life of Samuel, including the life of Eli. 1.1–7.1.

II. Samuel as judge. 7.2–15.35.

III. Saul and David. 13–31.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

The Old Testament World

1. The Lands where the Events of This Year's Lessons occurred. In the course of this year's lessons we shall follow Abraham from his early home in the valley of the Euphrates to the hills of Palestine and the pasture-lands of the South; journey with Joseph to the banks of the Nile and tarry with the children of Israel in the Land of the Sojourn; cross the Red Sea with Moses and his people and wander with them in the peninsula of Sinai; cross the Jordan with Joshua as leader and enter Canaan; and then see this long-Promised Land conquered and divided among the twelve tribes of Israel.

2. Extent of the Old Testament World. Five thousand miles east of the southern half of the United States, between the parallels which pass through Philadelphia and Lake Okechobee in southern Florida, lies the Old Testament world. The 27th and 40th parallels of north latitude and the 30th and 54th parallels of east longitude enclose an oblong space having the Caspian Sea at the northeastern corner, the Persian Gulf near the southeastern corner, the Nile River in the southwestern corner, and the Black Sea very near the northwestern corner though not near enough to show on the diagram. In the southwest the Red Sea extends into the oblong, and in the center of the western side is the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. The entire land area of this Old Testament world is only about one-third that of the United States, and nearly two-thirds of it is desert.

3. Mountain Ranges. Mountain ranges extend along the northern part. Among them is Mount Ararat, a peak which has been aptly called in our day "the great boundary stone between Russia, Persia, and Turkey." From

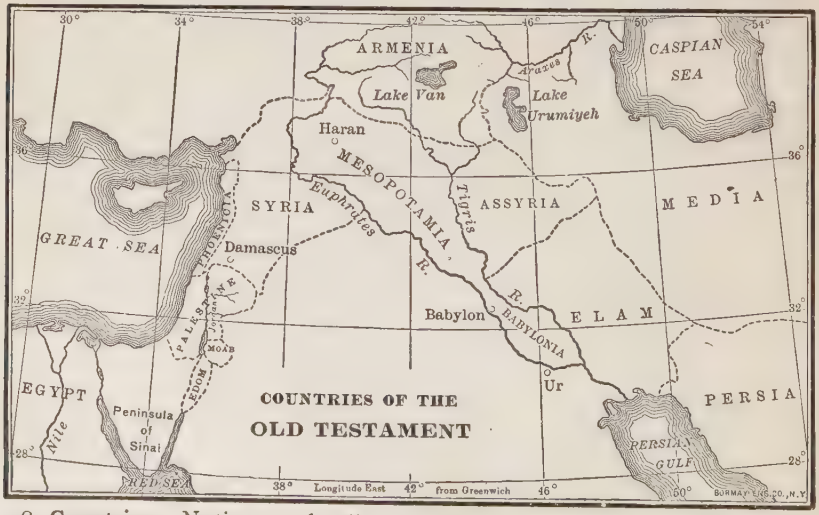
Mount Ararat the Caspian or Elburz Range extends southeastward around the Caspian Sea. The Zagros Mountains extend southeastward from Lake Van. Parallel with the northern Mediterranean shore are the Taurus Mountains, and parallel with the eastern Mediterranean shore is the Lebanon mountain range.

4. **Mount Ararat.** The summit of the peak now known as Mount Ararat is 17,750 feet above the sea. It is the traditional site where the ark rested after the Deluge, but whether it is the site where the Hebrew writer intended to say that the ark rested is doubtful. Southwest of Lake Van another mountain, now called Mount Judi, is claimed also as the Mount Ararat of the Bible. The district of Ararat was the region about Lake Van now called Armenia. Probably the site of the resting place of the ark was in the Kurdish Mountains in the south of Armenia, and then the name Mount Ararat was transferred to Mount Judi, and again to the Mount Ararat of to-day, as being the highest peak in this section. Mount Ararat is still called Massis by the Armenians themselves.

5. **Rivers and Lakes.** The Araxes is a small stream which flows northeastward into the Caspian Sea. South of this river are Lakes Van and Urimeyeh.

6. The Twin Rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, rise on opposite slopes of the highest mountain range in this section, whose peaks are the only ones having perpetual snow, and therefore were called by the Greeks the Niphates Mountains (from Nipha, snow). The rivers have cut channels for themselves two to three miles wide and three hundred feet deep. In very early times they entered the Persian Gulf by separate channels; at what time they united in one channel is not known. The Euphrates is one thousand seven hundred and sixty miles long, the longest river in western Asia.

7. South of the Lebanon Mountains is the Jordan River and the Salt Sea. South of the Mediterranean is the Nile, the longest river in the world.



8. **Countries.** Notice on the diagram that from between the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea the Arabian Desert extends northward in a wedge-shaped

form. The remainder of the Old Testament world south of the mountain ranges which cross it may be divided into three natural divisions: the western or Mediterranean slope, the central plain, and the eastern slope.

9. On the western slope, from north to south are Phœnicia and Syria, Palestine and Moab, the Peninsula of Sinai and Edom, and Egypt.

10. The Tigris River divides the central plain. On the west between the Euphrates and the Tigris is Mesopotamia on the north and Babylonia on the south; east of the Tigris, Assyria on the north and Elam on the south.

11. On the eastern slope Media occupies the northern part and Persia the southern.

12. **The Plain of the Euphrates and the Tigris.** From the highlands of Armenia to the Persian Gulf, a distance of seven hundred miles, the plain between the Euphrates and the Tigris extends. In ancient times the northern part was well watered and fertile, then came drier pasture land, and in the south the low alluvial land which had been built up from the sea by the soil brought down from the higher regions by the rivers. Canals intersected this lower plain, and supplied water for irrigation, so that it was one of the most productive regions of the world.

13. In this plain the Bible seems to locate the birthplace of the human race. Here men sought to build a tower that should "reach to Heaven." Here Abraham was born. This was the land of the exile. It was once very populous, great cities flourished, powerful empires arose which ruled the world. Now the cities have passed away and only mounds show where they were. The irrigating canals have been neglected and the plain is barren, affording scanty pasturage for the flocks and herds of wandering Bedouins.

14. Two great empires held this plain for centuries, and the dividing line between them moved north or south according as the one or the other was the stronger. The northern empire was known to the Hebrews as Pandan-Aram (Field of Aram) and Aram-Naharayim (Aram of the Two Rivers), and later to the Greeks as Mesopotamia, the Mid-river-land. The southern empire of Babylonia was called by the Hebrews Shinar or Chaldea.

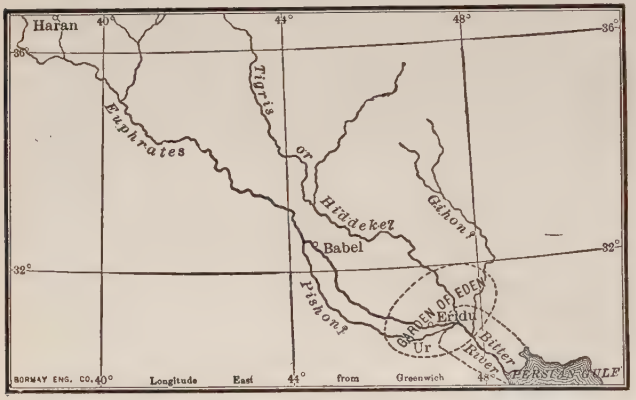
15. **Babylonia.** Before 4500 B. C., Babylonia was known as Kengi, the "land of canals and reeds." People who had a system of irrigating canals were already far advanced in culture. So you see it is a very ancient civilization that we are studying.

16. Close to the Persian Gulf was a very small country called the Sea Lands Above the Sea Lands lay the land of the Kaldi, which extended north almost to Babylon, the capital of Babylonia. When kings from the Kaldi country ruled in Babylon the name of Chaldea was used to include the whole Babylonian empire.

17. When Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees, the Babylonian Empire included all western Asia. Khammurabi (the Amraphel of Genesis was the ruler in the days of Abraham, and he called himself "King of the land of the Amorites," as Palestine was called by the Babylonians. The language spoken in Babylonia in Abraham's day, it is said, was as much like the Hebrew as the modern Spanish language is like the Italian.

18. **Eden.** "Eden means 'delight' in Hebrew, and the position of the garden has been assigned to various parts of the world," says Professor Sayce. "Even the North Pole and Australia have found advocates. The cuneiform inscriptions have, however, cleared up the geography of the garden

of Eden. The Sumerian (the language of the earliest inhabitants) name of the plain of Babylonia was Edin, which was adopted by the Semites under the form of Edinu. The seaport of primitive Chaldea was Eridu, 'the good city,' which stood near the mouth of the Euphrates. In its neighborhood was a garden, 'a holy place' wherein grew the sacred palm-tree — the tree of life. This tree of life is frequently represented in the Assyrian sculptures, where it is depicted with two guardian spirits or cherubs kneeling or standing on either side of it.



The statement of Genesis, that the river which went out of Eden was parted into four heads, is explained by the fact that the Persian Gulf was held to be a river by the Babylonians, and was accordingly called by them 'the bitter river.'" The Bitter River extended farther northwestward than does the Persian Gulf at present. The Pishon and Gihon were either canals or tributaries of the Tigris.

19. **Babylon,** the Babel of Genesis, was the capital of the Babylonian empire. It was a magnificent city in the time of Abraham, but its greatest glory was under Nebuchadnezzar. It was built on both sides of the Euphrates; only mounds now mark its site. The Mound Birs-Nimrûd, not far from Babylon, is the ruins of a great temple of the Babylonian God Nebo, which was rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar, though many have called it the "Tower of Babel."

20. **Ur.** This city, or the neighboring district, was the birthplace of Abraham. In his day Ur of the Chaldees was a port near the Persian Gulf on a great ship canal which is thought to have been the Pishon mentioned in Genesis, but its site is now one hundred and twenty-five miles away from the Gulf, not far from the union of the Tigris with the Euphrates. Excavations in the mounds of Mugheir, which occupies the site of Ur, have unearthed the ruined temples where the moon-god Sin was worshiped. These temples rose by successive stages and from the platform at the top the priests held their night watches in honor of their moon-god.

21. What happened here at Ur happened throughout the plain. The surface of the heaps of ruined temples and other buildings became covered with soil, vegetation sprang up, and in the course of time it looked like a natural elevation and was allowed to remain undisturbed until within less than a hundred years, and mainly in the last fifty years, explorers and scholars have opened the mounds and discovered the monuments. In this remarkable way our knowledge of this ancient civilization and its effect on other civilizations has been gained. Had the monuments been discovered earlier there would have been no scholars capable of revealing their secrets to us.

The bas-reliefs and sculptures on the temples and palaces represent war scenes, hunting scenes, etc.; ornaments of gold, silver, ivory, and precious stones, utensils of copper, bronze and glass have been found. Most valuable of all are the clay tablets, one hundred and sixty thousand of which are now in various museums. The key to their cuneiform inscriptions was discovered by Sir Henry Rawlinson by means of an inscription in the languages of Assyria, Persia, and Elam written on a great rock one thousand seven hundred feet high between Hamadan and Bagdad. From these "books" or clay tablets, the earliest authentic date gained is that of Sargon, who ruled northern Babylonia in 3800 B. C.

22. **Mesopotamia.** In Judges 3.8 it is said that the Israelites were subject to the King of Mesopotamia eight years. In later times Mesopotamia was a part of the great Assyrian Empire.

23. The only city connected with the early Bible narrative is **Haran,** situated near the great western bend in the Euphrates. Haran is represented on the monuments by four arrows crossed like a St. Andrew's cross. The name means "the crossroads"; the city was crossed by the great caravan road from Damascus to Egypt and connected by other caravan roads with Babylon and the Persian Gulf on the south, and Asia Minor on the north. To Haran came all the nations for grain and trade.

24. It was a journey of nearly six hundred miles from Ur to Haran. The road which Abraham and his father Terah took had been traveled by caravans and armies for at least two thousand years before them. They passed flourishing cities with magnificent palaces and temples, but they must have pitched their tents outside the city walls, for they traveled with their flocks and herds. Abraham remained so long at Haran that he afterwards spoke of the place as "his country." Haran was afterwards called in the Bible "the city of Nahor," for Nahor, Abraham's brother, settled there. At Haran Abraham found himself surrounded by the same worship of the moon-god Sin as at Ur.

25. Nothing remains of the ancient city save a long range of mounds on both sides of the river and the ruins of an ancient fortress. Near the city a well is pointed out as the traditional well where Rebekah met the messenger whom Abraham sent to bring back a wife for Isaac. Here Jacob came when forced to flee from his father's home, and remained till he returned to Canaan with a large family and great wealth in flocks and herds.

Ancient Egypt: The Land of the Sojourn of the Israelites

26. **Extent.** Our word Egypt comes from the name given by the Greeks to the country in the northeastern part of Africa. The Egyptians themselves called their land Kîmet, a word probably derived from a root word meaning black and referring to the black soil; while the Hebrews called it Mizraim. It is not probable that during all the five or six thousand years of Egypt's known history there has been much change in its surface features. While it has extended from the Mediterranean Sea to Nubia, and even (under Thothmes III) to the Sudan, and from the Red Sea to the Great African Desert, its habitable area has always been limited to the valley and delta of the Nile. As Palestine has been aptly called the world's great oasis, so

Egypt has been called its greatest river-meadow. The Nile flows over a succession of cataracts in Nubia, and the one farthest north, called the First Cataract, is the natural frontier of Egypt.

27. The surface of all Egypt consists of a layer of sand on top of a rock foundation, but on top of the sand down through the center of the country there is another covering of rich black earth which has been brought down and left there by the Nile in its annual overflows. This is the Egypt of today, and this only was the Egypt in the earliest times.

28. **Size.** The area of Egypt without the part that is wholly desert is about twelve thousand square miles. This is the area of all Palestine, Eastern and Western together; it is somewhat less than the area of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The arable land comprises about two-thirds of this area.

29. **Divisions.** We speak now of Lower or Northern Egypt and Upper or Southern Egypt, and the usual title of the earliest known kings of Egypt was "King of the two lands," or "King of Upper and Lower Egypt."

30. Upper Egypt, or the "South Land," was the narrow, winding valley of the Nile, from four to nine miles in width, limited by the two hill-ranges on either side.

31. Lower Egypt or the "North Land" comprised the Delta of the Nile. The hills which have hemmed in the Nile fall back as the river approaches the Mediterranean, and across the wide plain it reaches the Sea by several channels. This lower part of Egypt is called the Delta because its shape resembles the Greek letter Delta Δ.

32. **The Nile.** This great river is three thousand miles long. It rises in the great lakes of Central Africa, and the heavy rains which fall there are the cause of its yearly overflows. It begins to rise in the latter part of June and in three months it has spread over its greatest extent of territory. At Thebes it rises thirty-six feet above its usual level, and at its mouth about four feet. The new soil left as the river recedes is exceedingly fertile.

33. Herodotus, "the father of History," was right in calling Egypt "the gift of the Nile." The ancient Egyptians did not know where the Nile rises, and could not understand its regular overflow; they thought it was due to some divine agency, and they worshiped the Nile as one of their gods, and celebrated its rising by a series of festivals. Not only did the Nile make the land productive, but together with the canals it was the great highway of the country. So constantly did the Egyptians travel by water and so seldom by land, that they even represented their heavenly deities as going about the sky in boats.

34. **Climate.** Rain rarely falls in Egypt save on the Mediterranean coast, and the air is very hot and dry during the greater part of the year. In the spring, when the hot winds blew from the south, the rigorous work in the fields must have been unendurable to the Israelites during their years of bondage.

35. **Agriculture.** The chief occupation of the people has always been that of agriculture. The ancient title of Egypt was "the granary of the world"; the commonest cereals were wheat and barley. From the "mummy wheat," wheat preserved in the mummy cases through thousands of years, wheat has been raised in our land. The paintings on the walls of the tombs represent numerous vegetables, especially "the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick" which the Israelites remembered so long-

EGYPT
AND THE
PENINSULA OF SINAI
WITH THE
PROBABLE ROUTE
OF THE ISRAELITES
SCALE OF MILES
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Probable Route
VICINITY OF MT. SINAI
Longitude East from Greenwich
G R E A T S E A
M E D I T E R R A N E A N
Rosetta
Tanis
Daphnae
Pithom
Rameses
LAND OF GOSHEN
Migdol
Pihahiroth
CAIRO
Memphis
Pyramids
M I Z R A I M
E G Y P T
Arsinoe
Meheret Fay
L. Moeris
Tell el Amarna
WAY OF THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES
Wilderness of Shur or Etham
WAY OF THE WILDERNESS OF SHUR
Marah
Elim
Encamped by the Red Sea
Wilderness of Paran
Hazeroth
Dophkah
Feiran
Rephidim
Alush
MT. SINAI
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Wilderness of Sinai
Uma. Shomer
MIDIANITES
GULF OF AKABAH
R E D S E A
Jericho
Gilgal
Jerusalem
Jebus
Heshbon
MT. NEBO
Hebron
Gaza
Lachish
CANAAN
Beersheba
PHILISTINES
AMORITES
DEAD SEA
Dibon
R. Arnon
MOAB
Kir Moab
Brook Zered
Hormah
EDOM
JEBEL MADURAH
MOUNT HOR
Kadesh Barnea
Wilderness of Zin
JEBEL HAROON
Petra
The Arabah
MT. SEIR OR SHUR
Ezion Geber
Elath
Plain er Rahah
Wady es Sheikh
Deir
Wady el Deir
Convent Valley
Convent of St. Katharine
RAS SUFSAFEH
JEBEL KATHRINA
JEBEL MUSA
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ingly in their wanderings. (Num. 11.5.) The vine was cultivated extensively. The most important of all the plants was the papyrus, which grew in the Delta in such thickets that the princes were wont to hunt water-fowl there.

36. **People.** Who the earliest inhabitants of the land were is not known, but most scholars agree that the people of the third or fourth Dynasties did not belong to the negroid race, but came to Egypt from Asia. The mummies and the figures on the monuments show that their faces were oval, cheek bones prominent, noses long, and lips full. Their skin was dark brown and their hair jet black, though the people of the high class usually shaved their heads and wore wigs.

37. **Religion.** The gods of ancient Egypt were exceedingly numerous. The original deities were objects of nature, and among them Ra, the sun-god, was chief. Ra is usually represented as a hawk-headed man having a solar disk about his head; his sanctuary was at On. In one account that has come down to us Ra is addressed by seventy-two different names. Each district and each city had its special patron god. Ptah, the god of Memphis, was worshiped in the form of the Apis-bull; Amon, the god of Thebes, was represented by a ram; Horus of Edfu by a hawk; Thoth of Hermopolis by an ibis, etc.

38. **History.** When Abraham came to Egypt, Egypt had already had about three thousand years of history. In the third century B. C. an Egyptian priest named Manetho compiled a history of Egypt which has not been preserved, but from which other early writers quoted. He gave a history of thirty-one dynasties, and those are the only means that scholars have of estimating dates in Egyptian history, for the Egyptians themselves had no fixed year. These dynasties have been conveniently divided into three periods, the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom, and the New Kingdom.

39. In the earliest time the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt were united, but each had its own capital. The oldest King or Pharaoh was Menes who founded Memphis. The tombs of the Pharaohs of the first and second dynasties have been discovered in recent years at Abydos. During the fourth dynasty (about 4000 B. C., according to Flinders Petrie) the pyramids of Gizeh and the tombs were built, from whose inscriptions and wall paintings we have gained most of our knowledge of the life and times of ancient Egypt. Inscriptions bearing the names of Pharaohs of the sixth dynasty are found in all parts of Egypt and in their quarries in the peninsula of Sinai as well.

40. The period of the Middle Kingdom is considered as regards its material and artistic wealth as the golden age of Egypt. At some time during this period foreign invaders called Hyksos succeeded in gaining possession of Lower Egypt. Their name means, it is said, "Sheiks of the Bedouin"; they are often called the "Shepherd Kings." It is supposed by many scholars that it was during their supremacy that Joseph was raised to power in Egypt. They resided in the Delta, and their capital was at Zoan. The Pharaoh of the seventeenth dynasty at Thebes began the war of liberation, and the first Pharaoh of the eighteenth dynasty completed the overthrow of the foreign rule.

41. With the eighteenth dynasty (1587 B. C.) begins the New Kingdom and a new policy for Egypt. No longer are the Pharaohs content to extend their territory southward; they are eager for eastern conquests, and eventually

"regard such campaigns as their most important occupation." During twenty years Thothmes III led some fifteen expeditions into Palestine and Syria, and at the time of his death he had extended his sway as far as the Euphrates, as shown on the accompanying map.

Egypt under Thothmes III

42. Seti I was the first King of the nineteenth dynasty. His successor, Rameses II, reigned sixty-seven years and is the best known of all the Pharaohs. He is generally thought to have been the Pharaoh of the Oppression. His favorite place of residence was Zoan. He strengthened the Delta towns and built a series of forts across the desert to control Phœnicia and Palestine. After forming a treaty of peace with the Hittites in Palestine, he seems to have directed his attention to architecture and his renown is due to his industrious zeal, not only in building temples to the gods and even to himself, but also in effacing the names of other Pharaohs and substituting his own on those already erected. His son, Meneptah, was probably the Pharaoh of the Exodus. In 525 B. C., Egypt was conquered by the Persians and made for a time part of the great Persian Empire.

43. **Goshen.** The district east of the Delta, perhaps including a part of the Delta itself, was the land of Goshen. This land Joseph chose as a suitable place of abode for his father and brothers during the famine, and here the children of Israel remained during the years of oppression till the time of the Exodus. This district has been neglected and is now a barren, sandy plain, but in ancient times it was well watered by irrigating canals. It is described in Genesis as "the best of the land," and such it was for a pastoral people. The ancient Egyptians held shepherds in contempt. The Copts, who are descended from them, have one word in their language which means both a shepherd and a disgrace. Here in Goshen the Israelites could live by themselves, or with other foreigners already settled there, and away from the Egyptians.

44. **Thebes.** The largest and most magnificent city in Upper Egypt was the hundred-gated Thebes, the residence of the Pharaohs during the period of the oppression of the Israelites. It was built on a wide plain on both sides of the River Nile. Ruined temples here still bear witness to its ancient grandeur.

45. **Memphis.** This was the largest city of Egypt. According to Herodotus, Menes, the first historical King, built an immense dyke near the southern angle of the Delta and on the ground thus won from the Nile founded the city. The Hyksos Kings probably resided here, and after 1100 B. C. it was again the residence of the Pharaohs till the end of Egyptian independence in 525 B. C. Its site is now marked by mounds and a few stones and broken statues. The Arabs used its ruins as a source of building material for their city of Cairo. A broken colossal statue of Rameses II, over forty feet long, lies prostrate in a palm grove. This statue once stood before a temple which Rameses erected to Ptah, the local deity. Ptah was held to be "the maker of the world," and according to the popular belief the bull Apis was the incarna-

tion of this god. Apis was a black bull with certain white markings, and it was this god which the Israelites probably imitated with their golden calf in the wilderness. In 1859 sixty-four embalmed bodies of sacred bulls were found in a large crypt not far away.

46. Ten miles north of Memphis are the pyramids, gigantic structures which show the great skill of the ancient Egyptians. They date from the fourth dynasty. The Great Pyramid covers an area of thirteen acres, and is the only one of the so-called "Seven Wonders of the World" remaining. Near it is the great Sphinx, which has a lion's body and a human head, a figure ninety feet long and seventy feet high.

47. **On.** Near the point of the Delta, about twenty miles northeast of Memphis on an eastern branch of the Nile, was On, or Heliopolis (the City of the Sun), as the Greeks called it. The city was the center of the sun worship in Egypt and its Temple of the Sun was a magnificent structure. The priest of On was Potipherah, whose daughter became the wife of Joseph. It was probably at On that Moses was educated, for it was the most important seat of learning in Egypt. A solitary obelisk, seventy feet high, now marks the site of the city. The obelisk now in Central Park, New York, once stood in On.

48. **Zoan** was a large city on the Tanitic branch of the Nile, called Tanitic from Tanis, the Greek name of the city. Zoan (Hebrew), Tanis (Greek) and Avaris (Egyptian) all mean "House of Departure," that is, a frontier town.

> Marvelous things did he in the sight of their fathers,
> In the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan,

sings the Psalmist. In Num. 13.22 we learn that Zoan was built seven years after Hebron, which was a city of Canaan in the time of Abraham. It was one of the principal royal abodes of the Pharaohs.

49. **Pithom, Raamses, Succoth.** Doctor Naville in exploring mounds in the Wady Tumilat in Goshen, close to the modern and also the ancient fresh-water canal, found bricks whose inscriptions proved that he had found the site of Pithom, the City of Tum (the god of the setting sun). This was one of the treasure cities which the Israelites built for the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. Massive store-houses with brick walls twenty-two feet thick were unearthed. They had no opening save at the top. The largest were divided into compartments, and the dividing walls were eight to ten feet thick. The neighboring district is called Thuket, which is thought to be the Egyptian equivalent for the Hebrew word Succoth, the first encampment of the Israelites on leaving Egypt. Raamses, or Rameses, another city built by the Israelites, was probably not far from Pithom. From the "land of Rameses" the Israelites started when they left Egypt.

The Sinai Peninsula: The Land of the Wanderings of the Israelites

50. **Name.** The Sinai peninsula received its name from Mount Sinai, a mountain in the southern part named from Sin, the moon-god worshiped in Babylonia. In Babylonian literature there are traces of mining operations in the Sinai peninsula, and it is thought that Mount Sinai was a place of heathen worship long before the coming of the Israelites to this region

51. **Location.** The triangular peninsula of Sinai is a part of the great

peninsula of Arabia. It extends between the Mediterranean Sea on the north and the two arms of the Red Sea on the southeast and southwest. The depression called the Arabah, a continuation of the Jordan Valley, extends from the Salt Sea to the Gulf of Akabah on the east, and between the Arabah and the Mediterranean is the Arabian desert. The Isthmus of Suez on the west is now crossed by the Suez Canal which, through Lake Timseh and the Bitter Lakes, connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Gulf of Suez. From the Egyptian monuments and records we know that there was a canal here in the days of Moses, and there was a great wall east of it built as a protection for the canal and as a defense against hostile invaders.

52. **Area.** The area of the peninsula proper, according to the ordinance survey, is 11,600 square miles, about the same as that of Eastern and Western Palestine, or of the cultivated part of Egypt.

53. **Two Distinct Regions.** There are two natural divisions in the peninsula: the apex with its irregular mountain masses, and the northern part with its deserts and oases. The modern Arab name for the southern section is El Tôr, the Mountains. "It would seem as if this had been an ocean of lava" says an early traveler, "and while its waves were running literally mountain high, it was commanded suddenly to stand still."

54. It was in this section that Moses spent forty years of his life after he fled from Egypt, and here he saw God's presence in the burning bush and received His commission to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Here the children of Israel spent their first year after Moses led them out of Egypt.

55. A broad sand belt sweeps across the peninsula north of the mountains, and north of this is a great limestone plateau, a desert region which under various names extends to the Negeb, south of Canaan. This northern part of the peninsula the Arabs call the Badiet-el-Tih, the Desert of the Wanderings, for here the Israelites spent thirty-eight years. This was the desert region into which Hagar was sent with her son Ishmael, and here Ishmael grew up.

56. **The Deserts.** The Brook, or River, of Egypt which enters the Mediterranean Sea divides the northern plateau into nearly equal parts. The eastern portion seems to have been the section called in the Bible the Wilderness of Paran, and the northeastern part of this was called also the Wilderness of Zin. Kadesh, where the Israelites remained so long, was sometimes spoken of as in the Wilderness of Paran and again as in the Wilderness of Zin. The plateau west of the River of Egypt was called the Wilderness of Shur, or the Wilderness of Etham. Along the shore of the Gulf of Suez there is a desolate, gravelly plain, the Desert of Sin (not Zin) in the Bible. In the vicinity of Mount Sinai is the Wilderness of Sinai.

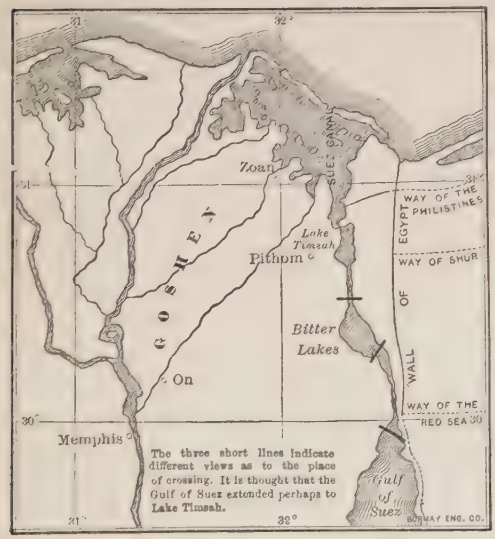
57. **Products.** The biblical narrative alone has given many the impression that the Israelites spent forty years in a barren desert region, wholly incapable of cultivation. Yet they had with them their flocks and herds, for which there was pasturage in the broad, winding wadies (river-beds which are dry most of the year), the highways through the mountain passes on the south, and here and there throughout the peninsula there were perennial springs where grass, palms, and tamarisks grew. The caper plant, called the hyssop in the Bible, thorn shrubs, shittim wood (of which the tabernacle was made) and other species of acacia, and white broom, or juniper, were found in the peninsula. Probably in the time of the Israelites there were more forests than

at the present time; with their destruction for charcoal and for the use of the miners there has been a decrease in the amount of rainfall, and a greater barrenness has resulted.

58. Nor was the peninsula wholly destitute of civilization. It was crossed by trade routes between Egypt and the regions north and east of it, and it must have had a port for ships from Egypt, for the Egyptians had worked its copper and turquoise mines for centuries before the coming of the Israelites. Slag heaps and traces of their smelting furnaces are still to be seen in various parts of the peninsula.

59. **The Wanderings of the Israelites. Rameses to Sinai.** It must be stated that there is not one place connected with the forty years' wanderings of the children of Israel whose location is not disputed. Even Mount Sinai is held by some scholars to have been, not the traditional mountain in the apex of the Sinai peninsula, but a peak on the other side of the Gulf of Akabah in Midian proper. While such a location for Mount Sinai explains some of the difficulties in the way of reconciling all the biblical statements, it raises other far greater ones, and there is more to be said in favor of the traditional location than can be urged against it.

60. The Israelites evidently followed one of the main routes out of Egypt. They started from the region of Rameses, and their first encampment was in Succoth, the district of Pithom. On reaching the fortification which crossed the Isthmus they probably were at a station called Etham, "on the edge of the wilderness." In this fortification or wall there were three gates, and Doctor Trumbull thinks the Israelites started for the first or northern gate, through which the road ran directly into the land of the Philistines, but because the Philistines would have contested their advance, they were divinely directed to turn southward. They continued their way past the middle gate, through which the road led directly to the Red Sea, and also past the southern gate, from which led the Wilderness Road, which was closed to them, no doubt, because the Egyptians were seen in pursuit, and then on to the Red Sea (the Gulf of Suez) where the wall ended. This was the station Pihahiroth.



61. It is supposed that after crossing the Red Sea the Israelites encamped at Ayun Musa (the Wells of Moses) and then took a southeastwardly course following the shore. At the end of a three days' march from the Red Sea they came to Marah, a word meaning bitterness. Great was the disappointment of the people when they rushed to drink the water there and found it bitter, but Moses cast in a shrub which made the water palatable.

62. From Marah to Elim was a short journey. This is thought to have been in one of the wadies (now called Ghurundel) which affords an excellent camping place. They found here a fountain in an oasis of palm trees.

63. A month was spent on the way between Rameses and the wilderness of Sin, which they entered after having encamped "on the Red Sea." The provisions which they brought with them from Egypt had now become exhausted, and they complained bitterly because of hunger. Quails and manna were sent in this wilderness.

64. Rephidim was their next station. (Two others are mentioned in the 33d chapter of Numbers, but these and many others in this chapter of which nothing is told or known are omitted in this account.) Rephidim has been identified as in the Wady Feiran. "Through the broad way," says Professor Harper, "there runs a small stream giving life and verdure all around, for here grow now over five thousand palm trees, the date palm, too, bushes of tamarisk, and patches of corn." Just before this oasis is reached is a rock which tradition says is the site of Massah and Meribah, the rock which Moses smote to obtain water for his thirsty, complaining people.

65. In the vicinity of Rephidim occurred the events narrated in the 17th and 18th chapters of Exodus. The Israelites won a victory over the Amalekites who occupied the southern part of Canaan and probably also the northern part of the peninsula of Sinai, but migrated, as the wandering Bedouins do to this day, to the higher southern section in the dry, hot months, and thus came in contact with the Israelites. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, visited Moses and counselled him in regard to appointing judges. Jethro's home was in Midian, and when Moses was pasturing his flock he was told, "When thou hast brought the people out of Egypt ye shall serve God upon this mountain." Midian proper lay on the eastern side of the Gulf of Akabah, and this is one reason for locating Mount Sinai there, but wandering tribes lived also on the western shore and it also was called Midian.

66. "They departed from Rephidim, and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai." In the third month of their pilgrimage we find them encamped before Mount Sinai, where they remained almost a year. Here occurred the events recorded in the latter part of Exodus and in the book of Leviticus. This was the "Mount of the Lord" where God spoke with Moses "face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend," where the tables of the law were twice written, and all the details of the rites and ceremonies recorded in the Pentateuch were given utterance.

67. This mount is called in the Scriptures both Horeb and Sinai. Horeb may have been used for the great central group of mountains of which Sinai is a special peak. The Jebel Musa (the Mount of Moses) range is the traditional Mount Sinai. (See the map of the Vicinity of Mount Sinai in the corner of the large map of the peninsula.) It is two miles long by one in breadth; from the central plateau of the mountain, numerous peaks rise, but the most prominent are those at the ends, on the south the Jebel Musa (about seven thousand feet above sea level) and on the north a lower bluff, Ras Sufsafeh, overlooking the great plain Er Rahah. From Ras Sufsafeh the Law was proclaimed. From a deep cleft back of Ras Sufsafeh a ravine leads to the plain of Er Rahah where the children of Israel assembled to receive the Law, and where the Tabernacle was built. This plain is large enough to hold a host of two millions. At the foot of Ras Sufsafeh a low line of mounds answers to the

"bounds" which were to keep the people from "touching the mount." The pointed one shown on the map is called the Hill of the Golden Calf. "Here in the heart of nature's profoundest solitude, amid scenery unsurpassed for wild and stern grandeur, history, tradition, and geography have combined to locate Sinai, 'The Mount of the Lord,' and all those wondrous events which were enacted round it."

68. **Sinai to Kadesh.** After almost a year spent at Sinai, word came to the Israelites: "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain; turn you, and take your journey." Before starting Moses made a request of Hobab for his guidance on the way. On the twentieth day of the second month in the second year after leaving Egypt they journeyed northeastward into the Wilderness of Paran. At the end of the first day's march they encamped at Taberah, or Kibroth-hattaavah, as it was also called. There their complaints were punished with fire and also with quails which brought a plague among them.

69. Hazeroth was their next stopping place, perhaps forty miles northeast of Jebel Musa, where a fountain is still used as a watering place for camels. The name means "a division," for here Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, and Miriam was punished with leprosy, but healed after Moses' pleading with God.

70. From Hazeroth they continued their journey till Kadesh was reached. Next to Sinai, this is the most important station in all the wilderness life of the Israelites, for it was their headquarters for thirty-eight years. Here the tabernacle with the ark was erected, and Moses and the elders dwelt, but the people, no doubt, went away from the immediate neighborhood in order to secure pasturage for their flocks and herds. They went on one journey as far south as Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Akabah. The site of Kadesh has been the subject of much controversy. From the biblical narrative we know that it was in the wilderness of Paran and in the Wilderness of Zin, not far from the southern boundary of Canaan, eleven days' journey from Sinai "by way of Mount Seir," or the route of the Arabah, and not far from the border of Edom and from Mount Hor. The location on the map, page 35, is now Ain Kadis (the Holy Place), the site identified as Kadesh-barnea by many noted scholars, "an extensive, hill-encircled plain, several miles wide, certainly large enough to have furnished a camping ground for Chedorlaomer's army or for all the hosts of Israel," says Doctor Trumbull. "About the middle of the wady is an extensive water-bed of unusual fertility for the desert."

71. Four centuries before the Exodus, in the days of Abraham, Kadesh is mentioned (Gen. 14.7) when Chedorlaomer and the kings with him conducted the earliest recorded military campaign. From the region of Kadesh the twelve spies were sent into Canaan to examine the land, and there the Israelites were left when the report of the ten spies caused such terror and rebellion among the people and they were sentenced to perish in the wilderness. Against the order of Moses they then marched northward and at Hormah were defeated by a combined attack of Amorites, Canaanites, and Amalekites, and were compelled to retrace their steps to the Wilderness of Paran.

72. This region was the school in which the new generation grew up that was deemed worthy of entering the Promised Land. At Kadesh Miriam died and was buried, and it was the scene of the rebellion of Korah and others (Num. 16). Here the people murmured for water (probably in the early part of their stay, though the time is not definitely given), and Moses in his im-

patience struck the rock which he had been told to "speak to"; the rock gave forth its waters but Moses and Aaron were sentenced to die before reaching the Land of Promise.

73. **Kadesh to the Jordan.** The time had now come for the Israelites to take possession of the land promised them. From Kadesh Moses sent messengers to the King of Edom and also to the King of Moab (Judges 11.16, 17) asking permission to pass through their land, but his request was refused. A glance at the map will show that this would have been their direct route to the east bank of the Jordan.

74. Edom was the mountainous region on either side of the Arabah. This was the Mount Seir where Esau had settled, and the Edomites were a mixed race, the descendants of Esau and of the native Horites. The Israelites were warned not to contend with their "brethren, the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, for God had given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession."

75. At Mount Hor, a peak "on the edge of Edom" Aaron died "in the first day of the fifth month in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt," and here Eleazar, his son, succeeded him as high priest. Mount Hor has long been identified as Jebel Harum (Aaron's mountain) in the Arabah near Petra south of the Dead Sea, but many scholars for excellent reasons locate it nearer Kadesh at the present Jebel Maderah. In the neighborhood of Mount Hor the Canaanite King of Arad fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners, and the Israelites vowed that if God would give them the victory, they would place the Canaanites under the ban uterly to destroy them.

76. To "compass Edom" the Israelites now made a long detour, going south down the Arabah to Ezion Geber, a port near the head of the Gulf of Akabah, and then northward along the eastern frontier of Edom, crossing the streams in their upper and shallower courses. The Edomites could have defended their mountain passes on the west, but here the open territory bordering the Arabian Desert could not easily be protected from invasion. On this journey, but whether before or after passing the Red Sea we do not know, the Israelites were plagued by serpents, and Moses lifted up the brazen serpent for their cure.

77. They continued their way northward through the wilderness of Moab till they came to the southern bank of the Arnon. At Jahaz near the Arnon they won a signal victory over Sihon, King of the Amorites, a victory ever afterwards referred to throughout Hebrew history as a proof of God's guidance and a reason for trusting Him. It was some time before this that the Amorites, who belonged in Western Palestine, had crossed the Jordan and driven the Moabites southward and the Ammonites northward, and taken possession of all the land between the Arnon and the Jabbok. The victory over Sihon gave all this territory to the Israelites.

78. From the heights of Abarim, the high ridge east of the northern end of the Salt Sea, they had their first view of Canaan, the Promised Land. Their long-sought-for goal was in sight.

79. The camp was pitched at Abel-Shittim, "the meadow of Acacias," "on this side Jordan by Jericho," for several months. An expedition advanced into the territory of Og, King of Bashan, and routed his army at Edrei, thus gaining all his territory north of Gilead. Another successful campaign was waged against the Midianites and Moabites farther east.

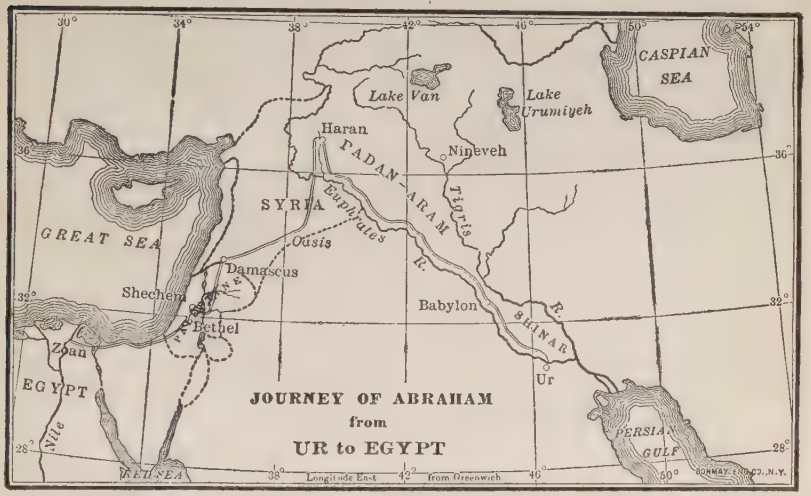
80. Balak, King of Moab, called Balaam to "come and curse this people,

for they are too mighty for me," but instead Balaam prophesied a glorious future for Israel. All the conquered land east of the Jordan was allotted to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh.

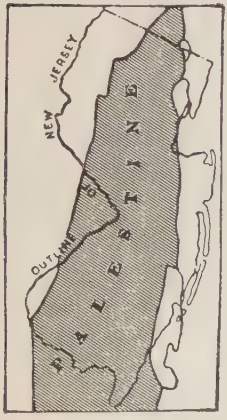
81. At this encampment Moses gave directions for the partition of the land west of the Jordan, appointed cities of refuge, delivered all the final commands of the book of Deuteronomy, and spoke his farewell address.

82. After Moses ascended Mount Nebo (part of the range Abarim) and there died his lonely death, and the thirty days of mourning for him were fulfilled, the Israelites under Joshua's leadership crossed the Jordan and encamped at Gilgal. Their desert wanderings were ended; the conquest of Canaan began.

PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF THE PATRIARCHS, THE CONQUEST, AND THE JUDGES



83. **Name.** We are indebted to the Greeks for our modern name of Palestine. They called the southern part of Syria, Syria Palaistiné (Syria of the Philistines), and later they used the adjective Palaistiné alone to designate the country. The Romans changed the name to Palestina, whence comes our word Palestine. In Old Testament times the country west of the Jordan was called Canaan. The Hebrew called it the Land of the Hebrews, or the Land of Israel.



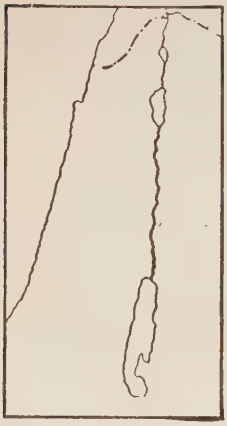
84. **Extent.** Notice the position of Palestine as regards the rest of the Old Testament world. It is limited on the north by the mountains of Lebanon, on the south by the Arabian desert, and on the west by the Great Sea (the Mediterranean). The eastern boundary of Canaan was the Jordan, but the eastern boundary of Palestine Proper, the Land of the twelve Tribes, was the Syrian desert. Except on the mountainous northern border, Palestine is surrounded by sea and desert.

85. **Area.** The area of Canaan is 6,400 sq. miles. Its size compared with that of the state of New Jersey is shown by the diagram on page 23. Palestine Proper includes an area of nearly twelve thousand square miles.

86. The Land of Promise, as given in the 34th chapter of Numbers, is very different from the land of possession. It included an area nearly equal to that of the New England states, from the Orontes in the north to Mount Hor and the "River of Egypt" on the south, and from the Euphrates on the east to the Mediterranean on the west. With the exception of the plain along the seashore, this was the Kingdom of the Israelites during a part of the reigns of David and Solomon only.

87. "From Dan to Beersheba," usually considered the length of the country, is one hundred and forty miles. The greatest length of western Palestine is one hundred and sixty miles, and its average width forty miles.

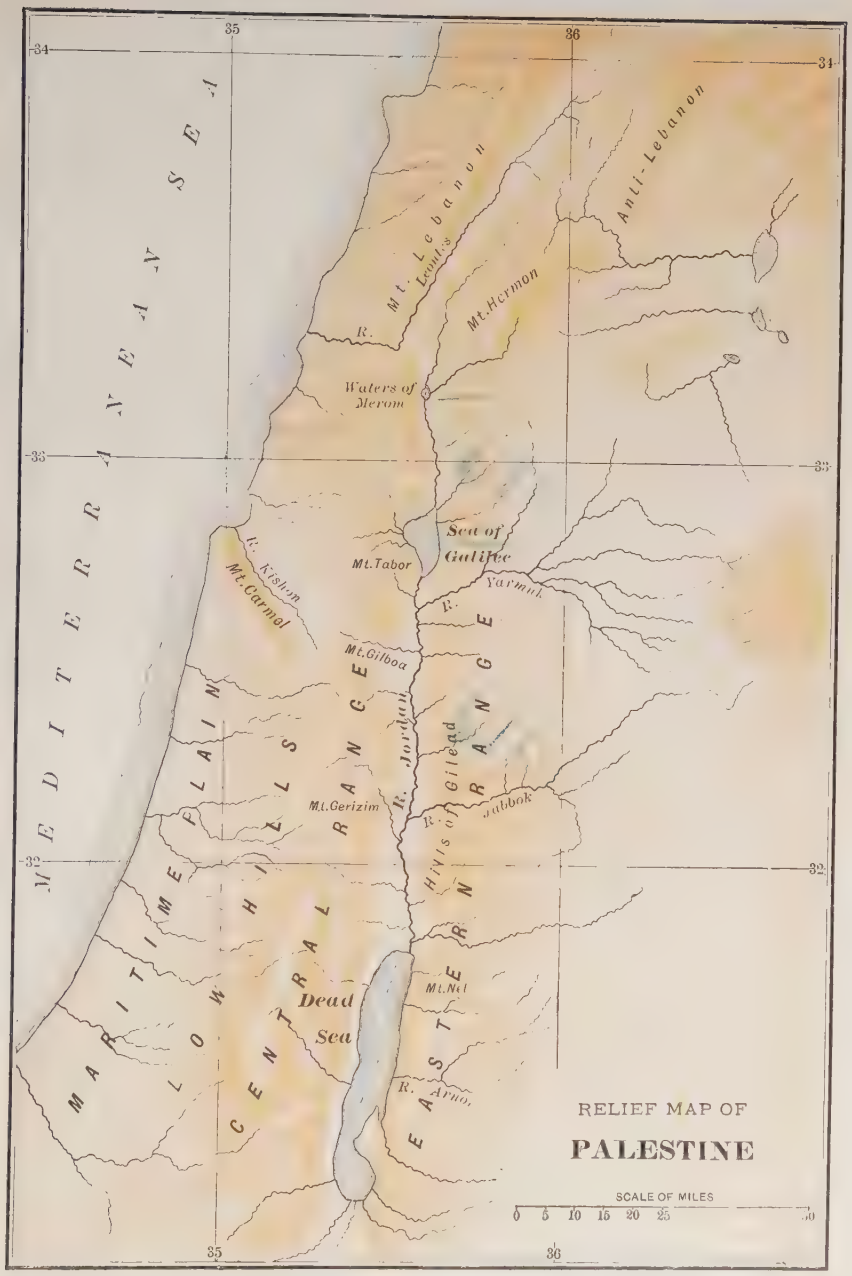
88. **Outline.** Few regions have a straighter coast line than Palestine. About a third of the distance down from the north is Mount Carmel and above this head-land there is a curve in the coast line. There are no harbors. Notice on the outline map that the southern line is more than twice as long as the northern. The southern line represents ninety miles, and the northern, forty miles.



89. **The Jordan River System.** Directly east of Mount Carmel — a distance of thirty miles — is the Sea of Chinnereth, better known by its New Testament name of the Sea of Galilee. This lake is thirteen miles long and eight miles in its greatest width. Ten miles north of the Sea of Chinnereth is Lake Merom, about four miles long. From four streams which unite above Lake Merom the Jordan River flows southward, through Lake Merom and the Sea of Chinnereth, and then for sixty-six miles farther south, till it is lost in the Salt Sea. The northern end of the Salt Sea is fifty-five miles east of the Mediterranean. This long, narrow lake is forty-seven miles long and about nine miles broad.

90. The word Jordan means the Descender, the Downcomer; in the ten miles between Lake Merom and the Sea of Chinnereth it falls six hundred and eighty feet. The deposits which it brings down in its tumultuous course have formed a delta through which it hastens into the Sea of Chinnereth. Between the Sea of Chinnereth and the Salt Sea the Jordan is a swift, turbulent stream flowing in so winding a channel that it is two hundred miles long in this part, though the distance it traverses is but sixty-five miles. It falls six hundred and ten feet in this part of its course.

91. The Jordan is "the Great Divider." There is a noted ford below Lake Merom and another above the Sea of Chinnereth. South of the Sea of Chin-

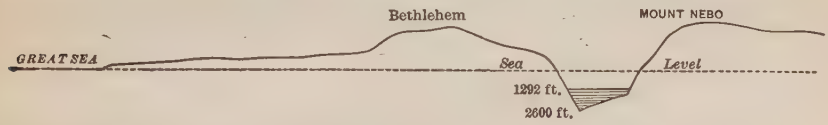

34
35
36
34
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Mt. Lebanon
R.
Mt. Leonis
Anti-Lebanon
Mt. Hermon
Waters of Merom
33
33
Sea of Galilee
Mt. Tabor
R. Kishon
Mt. Carmel
R. Yarmuk
Mt. Gilboa
MARITIME PLAIN
R. Jordan
Mt. Gerizim
Hills of Gilead
Jabbok
32
32
MOUNTAIN RANGE
CENTRAL HILLS
LOWLAND
Dead Sea
Mt. Nebo
EASTERN
R. Arnon
RELIEF MAP OF
PALESTINE
SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 15 20 25 30
35
36

nereth there are, perhaps, forty fords where one may cross in midsummer only, when the river is at its lowest. The Damieh ford, just below the junction of the Jabbok, is a noted crossing leading directly to Shechem. Here Abraham crossed when he entered the land, and Jacob on his way to and from Haran.

92. Lake Merom is surrounded by swamps and jungles of reeds. On the plain west of this lake Joshua met the combined forces of six kings and won a great victory.

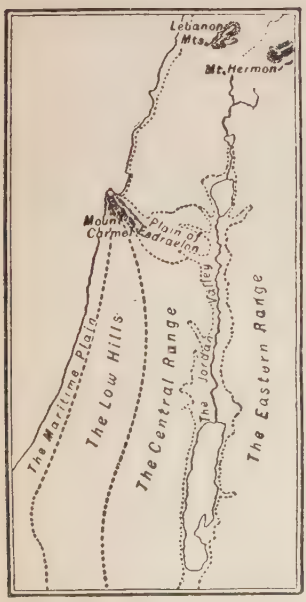
93. The Sea of Chinnereth is surrounded by hills with a narrow beach intervening.

94. The Salt Sea, which we know as the Dead Sea, and the Arabs call Bahr Lut, the Lake of Lot, is also called in the Old Testament the Sea of the Plain and the East Sea. It is five times as salt as the ocean, for while it receives four or five small streams besides the Jordan River, it has no outlet, and the constant evaporation due to the excessive heat of the region, so far below sea level, leaves the water bitter with brine. No fish can live in it. At the entrance of the Jordan the bottom of the lake is as far below the surface as



the surface is below the Mediterranean, but it shelves rapidly upward to only eight to fourteen feet in depth at its southern end. Along the shore there is now no vegetation. There are deposits of sulphur and bitumen, and here and there tall figures of salt. Naturally one of them is called "Lot's Wife."

95. **Five Parallel Regions.** To understand the geography of Palestine and the course of its history, one must keep in mind the five parallel strips which cross it lengthwise. The diagram shows (1) the Maritime (Sea-coast) Plain; (2) the Low Hills; (3) the Central Range; (4) the Jordan Valley; and (5) the Eastern Range. In crossing Palestine eastward from the sea, one crosses the low, level plain along the coast, ascends the low foot-hills, mounts to the summit of the central range, and, then descends quickly to the deep Jordan Valley, far below the Mediterranean level, and after crossing the Jordan River climbs up again through a steep canyon to the heights of the eastern range. In two days' journey from the Salt Sea to the highest part of the eastern plateau one ascends seven thousand one hundred feet.



96. North of Mount Carmel, the Plain of Esdraelon extends southeastward, breaking through the Low Hills and Central Range, and uniting the Jordan Valley with the Maritime Plain.

97. **The Maritime Plain.** This plain is only a few hundred feet above the sea. South of Mount Carmel the coast trends westward more

than does the Central Range, and this makes the plain much wider at the south than at the north. The soil is well-watered and very fertile. Josephus calls it "The Forest," for it was once covered with oak trees. In Old Testament times this plain was never inhabited by the Israelites. South of Joppa it was called the Plain of Philistia; between Joppa and Mount Carmel, the Plain of Sharon; and north of Mount Carmel, Phœnicia. It has been a famous war-path; up and down it have marched the armies of Thothmes, Rameses, Sennacherib, Cambyses, Alexander, Pompey and Napoleon.

98. **The Low Hills.** This region was called by the Hebrews the Shephelah. It consists of gray-colored, rounded hills from three to five hundred feet high, with many cross valleys. In the southern part they are separated by valleys from the central range; in the northern part they are foot-hills of that range. This Shephelah was the "debatable land" between the Israelites and the Canaanites.

99. **The Central Range.** North of Palestine in Syria there are two lofty parallel ranges of mountains separated by a narrow valley, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Mountains. Their extensions southward are the Central Range and the Eastern Range of Palestine. Upon the Lebanon Mountains the vapor-laden winds from the Mediterranean deposit their moisture, and it is carried down the Jordan Valley by the Jordan River.

100. The Central Range, although the western of the two ranges of Palestine, is called central because historically it has been the center of the land. On the west the descent is gradual; on the east it is short and precipitous.

101. In the north the Central Range is a plateau walled by hills; the highest peak is four thousand feet, then come ranges running east and west, about one thousand feet lower, till they sink to the Plain of Esdraelon. South of Esdraelon the Central Range consists of a network of mountains and valleys, and then becomes a tableland two thousand four hundred feet high in northern Judea, whence it gradually sinks to the Negeb.

102. The Negeb, of "The South," extends from Canaan into the Arabian desert as far as Kadesh-barnea, and from the Salt Sea to the Great Sea. This is the section referred to in Genesis when Abraham is said to have gone up out of Egypt into the South.

103. With the hills of Judea the Israelites are associated throughout their life in Palestine. It was on the mountains that they lived. The Sea-Coast Plain and the Valley of Esdraelon were held most of the time by their enemies, and the hot Jordan Valley was thinly peopled.

104. **The Jordan Valley.** The Jordan Valley, through which the Jordan River flows, is a deep, colossal chasm from five to fifteen miles broad which extends throughout the length of Palestine. Just below Lake Merom the valley sinks below sea level; at the Sea of Chinnereth it is six hundred and eighty feet below, and at the Salt Sea thirteen hundred (1292) feet below the Mediterranean, the lowest valley on the surface of the earth. "No other part of the earth's land surface sinks much over three hundred feet below the level of the sea," says George Adam Smith. "There may be something on the surface of another planet to match the Jordan Valley — there is nothing on this." Below the Salt Sea the valley rises to a height of three hundred feet above sea level, and then sinks to the Gulf of Akabah.

105. The Arabs call the Lower Jordan Valley, between Lake Chinnereth and the Sea of the Plain, El Ghôr, the Rift, or the Depression. It is only three

or four miles wide, except at Bethshan, where it expands to six or seven miles in width, and at Jericho, where it becomes forty miles wide. A dense jungle marks the limit to which the river rises in flood time (April), while mud banks and driftwood line the narrower river-bed. The heat in this valley is intense from early spring till late autumn. Swamps are numerous, and wherever there is water, vegetation is rank.

106. **The Eastern Range.** "Who that has ever traveled in Palestine has not longed," says Dean Stanley, "to cross the Jordan Valley to those mysterious hills which close every eastward view with their long, horizontal outline, their ever-shadowing heights, their deep purple shade?" In the far northern part rises the great white dome of Mount Hermon, "the King of Syria." It is the southern end of the Anti-Lebanon Range, or "Lebanon toward the sun-rising," and is the loftiest mountain in Palestine, towering nine thousand feet above the sea. Parts of it are covered with snow the year round. Two of the sources of the Jordan are at its base.

107. The Eastern Range extends a distance of one hundred and fifty miles from north to south, and varies in width from thirty to eighty miles. Its average elevation is two thousand feet above the sea and much more above the Jordan Valley. The western margin is made still higher by extinct volcanoes. It is crossed by three large rivers, the Yarmuk, the Jabbok, and the Arnon. Near the northern end of the Dead Sea are the mountains of Abarim, from one of whose peaks, called Mount Nebo and Mount Pisgah, Moses beheld the Promised Land and died.

108. In the northern part, north of the River Yarmuk, was Bashan. It is crossed by many brooks and is the richest grazing land in all Palestine. Bashan was called the granary of Syria.

109. The middle section, between the Yarmuk and the Arnon, was Gilead. It is divided naturally into two parts by the Jabbok River, and the name Gilead in the Old Testament sometimes refers to one half alone and sometimes to the other, while the term "Plains of Moab" refers also to southern Gilead. Gilead was early famed for its balm, myrrh, and other spices. It was to a caravan from Gilead bound for Egypt with its spices that Joseph was sold.

110. The Jabbok River is sixty miles long and flows in a deep ravine with a somewhat rapid course. Its name, "the Struggler," was given it because of the difficulty which it seems to have in finding its way through the steep hills. The ford where Jacob crossed was naturally the one about three miles east of the Jordan.

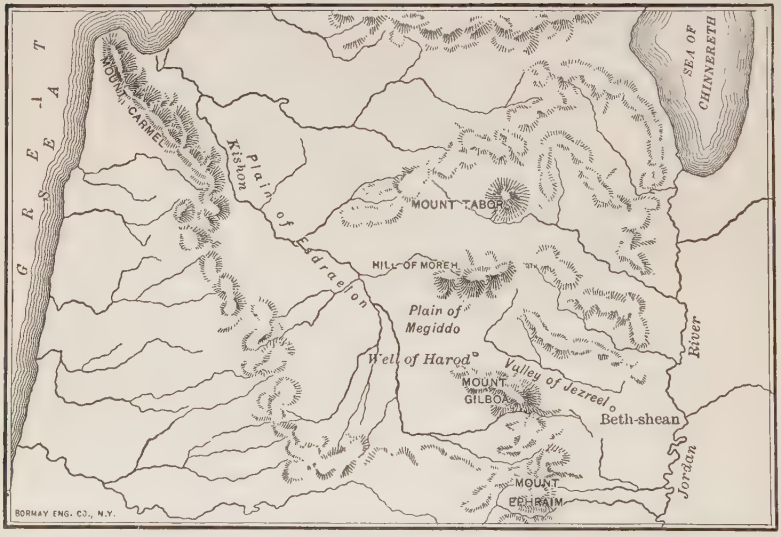
111. South of the Arnon was Moab. The land of the Moabites strictly speaking lay between the Brook Zered and the River Arnon, but in a wider sense it extended northward to the Jabbok, and included part of Gilead, the region usually called the "Plains of Moab."

112. The Arnon crosses the plateau in a deep canyon for fifty miles. "The cliffs on either side rise almost sheer from fifteen hundred to three thousand feet, broken at places with impassable, short ravines running north and south. The valley has no equal on earth except the Colorado Canyon, which is more extensive. No one who has ever crossed it will wonder why it was made the political boundary of Eastern Palestine, for it is one of the grandest natural boundaries conceivable, and the fact of leading such a throng as the children of Israel into it, across it, and up into the Plains of Moab, may well add to

the glory of Moses and Joshua, even though they avoided the chasm at the west and went eastwardly until they found an easier crossing."

113. From Gen. 14.5 we learn that the original inhabitants of the country were called the Emim, and that they were subjugated by Chedorlaomer in the days of Abraham. Lot's descendants gained possession of the territory, and they were the Moabites who refused to let the Israelites cross their western territory. The events of the last fifteen chapters of Numbers, and all of the book of Deuteronomy, occurred in the Plains of Moab. Ruth, the ancestress of King David was a Moabitess. Closely allied with the Moabites throughout their history were the Ammonites, descendants of Lot's other son, whose territory can not be given.

114. **The Plain of Esdraelon.** This is a triangular plain, having its apex at the Mediterranean north of Mount Carmel. On the north there is a steep wall of hills a thousand feet high. On the east is the river Jordan, but this end is blocked by Mount Tabor and the Hill of Moreh (Little Hermon). On the south are Mount Gilboa and the lower hills of Mount Ephraim and Mount Carmel. Mount Tabor is an isolated, forest-clad cone. At the command of the prophetess Deborah, Barak mustered on its summit the warriors of Zebulum and Naphtali and marched down to meet and defeat Sisera with his iron chariots on the plain below.



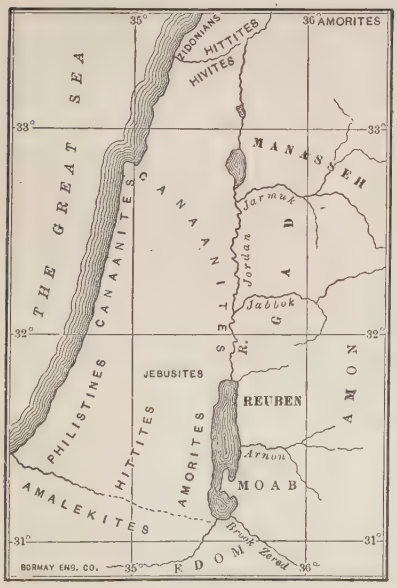
115. The Plain of Esdraelon is watered by the Kishon, a turbulent stream in winter but very small in summer, which flows into the Mediterranean. The Eastern part of the plain was called the Valley of Jezreel, and the central part the Plain of Megiddo. (From Jezreel comes our word Esdraelon, through the Greek.) The Plain is the only really large level space in Palestine, and is noted for its rich, fertile soil and abundant harvests. Far more famed is it, however, as the great battle-field of the East. More battles have been fought here than on any other battle-field of the world. "Here for four thousand years was the

great trail of the nations," says William Eleroy Curtis. "It naturally became the arena of war between the lowlanders, who trusted in their chariots, the Ishmaelites who fought from the saddle, and the Israelite highlanders of the surrounding mountains." During the stormy times portrayed in the Book of Judges, this plain was often reddened with blood. The Spring of Harod was north of Mount Gilboa; here Gideon's three hundred were encamped and the Midianite camp was north of them.

116. **The Earliest Inhabitants.** The people who first dwelt in Palestine were held in dread by the later races. Little is known of these earliest inhabitants save that they were recalled as of gigantic stature and as formidable enemies. Some of them were the Anakim whom Gideon conquered at Hebron. The giant Og, King of Bashan, whom the Israelites conquered before crossing the Jordan, belonged to the Rephaim (Lofty Ones). Others were known as Emim (Terrible Ones), Zuzzim (Tall Ones), Horites (Dwellers in Caves), and Avim (Dwellers in Ruins).

117. **The Sidonians or Phœnicians.** When Abraham came to Canaan later tribes were in possession of most of the country. In the Maritime Plain north of Mount Carmel were the Sidonians, a name given them from their city of Sidon. These people the later Greeks called Phœnicians, and by this name they are better known to us. They came originally from the Persian Gulf and spoke the same language as the people of Ur. Their country was never possessed by the Israelites. Tyre and Sidon were their chief cities.

118. **Canaanites.** All the tribes of Canaan were sometimes called Canaanites, but the term belonged strictly to a tribe dwelling in the Plain of Esdraelon and the Plain of Sharon and also in the Jordan Valley. They were the "Lowlanders." Joppa belonged to them and the "five cities of the Plain."



119. **Philistines.** The southern part of the Maritime Plain and part of the Shephelah were held by the Philistines. They were probably immigrants from Crete or some other Grecian coast, and they entered Canaan about the time that Abraham did. Their five strong cities were Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. The Philistines were the most powerful enemies of the Israelites during the time of the Judges.

120. **The Hivites.** The Hivites were villagers, a commercial people not given to warfare. They dwelt north of Palestine and also in the central range south of the Plain of Esdraelon. Shechem was their principal city in the time of Jacob. Gibeon and three others formed the "Gibeonite league" and made a treaty with Joshua.

121. **The Hittites.** This race is often mentioned in the Old Testament, but about fifty years ago it was claimed that such a race could not have ex-

isted, since there was no reference to them in any other source. Then the discoveries of Egyptian and Assyrian Monuments not only proved their existence but showed that they were at one time a very powerful people. On these monuments Palestine is known as "The Land of Heth," that is, the land of the children of Heth, the Hittites. Their great stronghold was in northern Asia Minor, in the Taurus Mountains and on the Orontes, but they probably dwelt in the northern part of the Central Range also. They occupied the southern portion of the range in Abraham's day. It was from Ephron the Hittite that he purchased his field of Machpelah.

122. **The Girgashites.** Nothing is definitely known about these people. They are supposed to have settled west of Lake Chinnereth.

123. **The Perizzites.** It is thought that the word Perizzite meant "rustic," and that the Perizzites did not live in cities, but were scattered throughout the land.

124. **Jebusites.** We hear of the Jebusites only in their fortress of Jebus, the origin of the city of Jerusalem. They retained their stronghold till David's time.

125. **The Amorites.** In the earliest Babylonian records the whole of Syria is assigned to "the Lord of the Amorites." The Amorites were a warlike race of "great persistence and character, and strongly resembled Europeans." At the time Abraham entered Canaan the Amorites were in possession of the highlands. At the time of the conquest they occupied a tract of land on the west of the Salt Sea and also east of the Salt Sea and of the Jordan. Joshua defeated five kings of the Amorites at Gibeon, and also another confederacy of Amorites west of the Sea of Merom. In the days of Samuel there was peace between the Israelites and the Amorites.

126. **History.** Palestine lay on the highway between Asia and Egypt, and was overrun and plundered by every military campaign waged by either country against the other, while not a few of their battles they waged on her soil. During the 18th and 19th dynasties of Egypt there were fourteen great military expeditions that entered Palestine. Not only was Palestine a "buffer state," but because of its situation on the Mediterranean, and resulting commercial advantages, its possession was coveted by other nations.

127. When Abraham entered Canaan it formed part of the Babylonian Empire. When Babylonia was conquered by foreign kings, Canaan regained its independence, but soon afterwards Thothmes III, of the 18th dynasty (perhaps 1503–1449 B. C.) made it a province of Egypt and governed it by commissioners. After the fall of the 18th dynasty, Canaan was free for a brief period, but was reconquered by Seti I, and it yielded obedience to his son Rameses II. The invasion of Egypt by Libyans from the west and other hordes from the Greek seas after the death of Rameses occupied all

In the time of Abraham

In the time of Moses

the war strength of Egypt, and Canaan was free from their dominion.

128. The different races in possession of Canaan were independent of one another, and not being united the Israelites were able to conquer them. Not long after Israel's conquest and settlement, their land was invaded by a Mesopotamian King. Othniel drove them out. When the Moabites crossed the Jordan and conquered the southern section, making Jericho their headquarters, Ehud subdued them. Deborah and Barak overcame the oppression of the Canaanites of northern Palestine. Gideon conquered the Midianites. Jephthah won the victory over the Ammonites. The Philistine raids were met by Shamgar and then by Samson. During the closing years of Eli the Philistines were in full control; the Israelite tribes were united by Samuel and they succeeded in throwing off the Philistine yoke.

129. **Palestine as Divided among the Tribes.** While the general location of each tribal territory is well known, the exact boundary lines varied at different times, and some tribes possessed cities within the territory of other tribes. Moses himself seems not to have regarded the land east of the Jordan as Canaan, but it was part of the Land Promised, and to two and one-half of the tribes he gave this section at their own request. The southern part from Moab to the river Arnon fell to Reuben. This tribe seems to have cared only for the pasture lands, and the towns gradually fell into the possession of the Moabites. Heshbon was the most important city. The territory of Gad was the land of Gilead. The tribe retained all the pasture lands, but many towns north the Jabbok were given to Jair of the tribe of Manasseh. The rich pasture land of Bashan, famous for its oak forests and its herds of wild cattle, fell to the half tribe of Manasseh.

130. On the west of the Jordan, after the final settlement, the tribe of Simeon was the farthest south. In its territory were many cities interesting from their connection with the history of the Patriarchs. The tribes of Judah and Ephraim were rivals for the supremacy among the tribes. Judah had the land west of the Salt Sea, but the tribe dwelt only in "the hill country." Between Judah and Ephraim were Dan on the west and Benjamin on the east. The territory of Dan was constantly in danger from the Philistines on its western border, and was, moreover, so small for the size of the tribe that later a part of the tribe went northward and settled around the city which they named Dan. Benjamin, the smallest of all the tribes, had a small territory, and yet it included twenty-six cities. Notice how many there were which were important in Israelitish history. Ephraim's territory was beset on the east and west by the Canaanites, and when they complained to Joshua that their land was too small for them he told them to gain room by driving out their enemy. Joshua belonged to this tribe. Shiloh, the religious center for nearly four centuries, was in the tribe of Ephraim. North of Ephraim lay the territory of the half tribe of Manasseh, to which two of the judges, Jephthah and

Gideon, belonged. Issachar was given the plain of Esdraelon, but was able to hold only the mountains. The tribe of Zebulon had a small district which, unlike that of all the other tribes, bordered neither on the sea coast nor on the Jordan Valley. Asher lay along the northern sea coast. This tribe soon held friendly relations with the Phœnicians and Canaanites, and only those who occupied the mountain range retained their power. Naphtali held the northern portion of Palestine along the Jordan. To the tribe of Levi were given forty-eight cities scattered throughout the land.

131. **Cities of the Maritime Plain. Gaza** was the last city on the road to Egypt, "the outpost of Africa, the door of Asia." It was three miles from the sea. This was the Philistine capital. Here Samson wrought several of his exploits and here his death occurred. A few miles south of Gaza was **Gerar,** which was connected with Isaac's history.

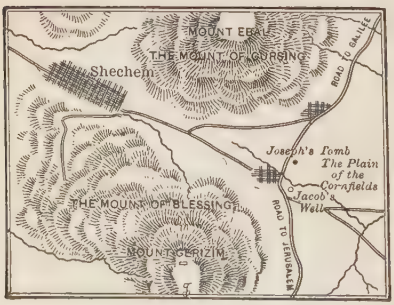
132. **Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron,** and **Gath** were other important Philistine cities. Ashkelon was ten miles north of Gaza and was the only one directly on the sea coast. Ashdod was three miles from the sea, and ten miles still farther north, "the half-way station on the great road between Gaza and Joppa." The Philistines brought the ark to Ashdod. Ekron, to which the ark was sent from Ashdod, was northeast of that city.

133. **Joppa,** now Jaffa, is in the Plain of Sharon. It was a Canaanite city. Farther north were **Sidon** and **Tyre,** cities of the Phœnicians.

134. **Cities in the Shephelah. Zorah,** in the tribe of Dan on the borders of Judah, was the birthplace of Samson. A few miles southwest was **Timnath,** the home of the Philistine maiden whom he married, and across the Valley of Sorek was **Beth-shemesh,** to which the Philistines sent back the ark they had captured. From Beth-shemesh the ark was sent out of the Shephelah into the nearest hill-town of **Kirjath-jearim.** Here it remained till removed by David.

135. **Cities of the Central Ranges. Dan.** In the far north the town of Laish belonged to the Phœnicians till six hundred of the tribe of Dan took possession of it. They changed its name to Dan. This was considered the northern frontier town of the Israelites. Abraham pursued Chedorlaomer's forces to Laish and there rescued Lot and much spoil.

136. **Shechem.** In the long narrow valley between mounts Ebal and Gerizim lies the city of Shechem, in the most beautiful spot in Central Palestine. There is no other region in Palestine connected with so many of the events of this year's lessons. About forty centuries ago Abraham encamped here under the terebinth of Moreh, and built an altar to Jehovah. Here Jacob settled two hundred years later and dug a well which still bears his name. In this field Joseph wandered in search of his brothers till told that they had gone to Dothan, and here his bones were brought and buried after waiting so long in Egypt for the children of Israel to leave for the Promised Land. Here Joshua built an altar, and at a great national assembly held a most impressive service where "half of the people stood



Shechem

CANAAN,
AS DIVIDED AMONG
THE TWELVE TRIBES
ENGLISH MILES
0 10 20 30 40
Sidon
Zarephath
Tyre
R. Leontes (Litany)
Abel-beth maachah
Laish or Dan
Kedesh
Hazor
Waters of Merom
Abdon
Achzib
Dabbasheth
Accho
Rimmon
Bethlehem
Endor
Shunem
Jezreel
Mt. Gilboa
Engannim
Dothan
Thebez
Mt. Ebal
Tirzah
Shechem
Mt. Gerizim
Shiloh
Ono
Gittah
Beth Dagon
Baal Hazor
Bethel
Ai
Beeroth
Ramah
Gibeon
Ekron
Jericho
Ajalon
Anathoth
Zorah
Mt. of Olives
Jerusalem
Timnath
Zanoah
Bethlehem
Beth Shemesh
Askelon
Gath
Jarmuth
Socoh
Etam
Ashdod
Ekron
Lachish
Maresha
Nezib
Beth-zur
Hebron
Adoraim
(Hazazon Tamar)
Gaza
Debir
Ziph
Engedi
Carmel
Maon
Socoh
Eshtemoa
Jattir
Kerioth
Arad
Gerar
Beer Sheba
Aroer
Ziklag
Wilderness
Dead Sea
Salt Sea
Valley of Salt
Plain of Jericho
Mountains of Abarim
Mt. Nebo
Heshbon
Elealeh
Baal-meon
Jazer
Abel-shittim
Beth-haran
Beth-jeshimoth
Rabbath-ammon
Ramoth Gilead
Mt. Gilead
Mahanaim
Succoth
Jabesh Gilead
Pella
Bezer
Dibon
Aroer
Ar (Rabbath) Moab
Kir Moab
Brook Zered
R. Arnon
Beth-shean
Beth-arbel
Tabor
Golan
Aphek
Ashteroth Karnaim
Edrei
Geshurites
Damascus
Mt. Hermon (Sion Sirion)
Anti Libanus
R. Abana
Mt. Lebanon
Banl Gad
Dan
Asher
Naphtali
Zebulon
Issachar
Manasseh
(Beyond Jordan)
Land of Gilead
Land of Tob
Great Sea
Mt. Carmel
Valley of Jezreel
Brook Cherith
R. Jordan
Sea of Galilee
Waters of Merom
Ephraim
Mount Ephraim
Benjamin
Judah
Simeon
Reuben
Gad
Manasseh
Dan
Naphtali
Asher
Zebulon
Issachar
Longitude East 30′ from Greenwich
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over against Mount Gerizim and half of them over against Mount Ebal," and he read "all the words of the lay, the blessings and the cursings," and from Mount Ebal the curses were repeated and from Mount Gerizim the blessings. The face of Ebal is bare and stony, while that of Gerizim is covered with olive groves, and very fitting it seems that Ebal should have been chosen as the Mount of Cursing and Gerizim as the Mount of Blessing. Here later Joshua assembled the tribes of Israel to listen to his farewell words. Most solemnly the people renewed their covenant with Jehovah, and Joshua erected a great stone in memory of their vow, calling it Ebenezer, the Help of the Lord. On this plain Abimelech was declared King in the days of the Judges, and from the slope of Mount Gerizim his brother Jotham rebuked the ungrateful Shechemites and spoke his parable about the talking trees. (Judges 9.7–21.) Shechem was one of the cities of refuge. In later history it continued to be an important center of events.

137. **Dothan** is fifteen miles north of Shechem. This district where Joseph's brothers went for pasturage is still fertile, and there are cisterns here similar to the one into which Joseph was cast.

138. **Bethel** is twenty miles south of Shechem and ten miles north of Jerusalem. Bethel, House of God, was the name given by Jacob to the pillar he erected outside the ancient city of Luz when on his way from Beersheba to Padan-aram (perhaps, or the hill on the southeast which rises to its top in terraces of stone), and this name was afterwards given to the city itself. From a hill near by a wide prospect is gained, and this is probably the hill where Abraham and Lot stood, and Abraham said, "Is not the whole land before thee?" When Samuel was judge he came to Bethel on his circuit. The site is now bare and desolate.

139. Five miles east of Bethel was **Ai,** where the Israelites were at first defeated and again victorious after capturing Jericho.

140. **Shiloh** was two miles north of Bethel. The tabernacle was removed from Gilgal to Shiloh by Joshua, and remained here three hundred and sixty years. To Shiloh Israelites came for their great religious feasts. There is a rock-cut platform on the site, which may have been where the tabernacle stood. Samuel's youth was spent here with Eli, and here Eli died when word was brought to him that the ark, which had been taken into battle, had been captured and his sons slain. Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines.

141. **Jebus.** Jerusalem is thirty miles from the Mediterranean and eighteen miles from the Jordan on the highest part of the highlands of Judea. It was called Jebus in Old Testament times, from the Jebusite tribe which long dwelt there. From the Amarna tablets discovered in Egypt in 1887 it has been learned that a hundred years before the Exodus it was called Urusalem, Uru, the same word as Ur, meaning the City, and Salem, meaning Peace. When Abraham returned from his expedition against Chedorlaomer he was met by Melchizedek, "King of Salem," who was doubtless the King of Urusalem. When Joshua invaded the land he overthrew Adonizedek, King of Jebus. In the days of the judges Jebus was in possession of its native inhabitants. In one thousand B. C. David conquered it and made it his capital.

142. **Bethlehem** is six miles south of Jerusalem. It was known as Ephrath until after the conquest. Jacob came here on his return journey from Padan-aram, and a short distance from the city is the traditional place where he buried Rachel. A stone supposed to cover the tomb (inside a modern

structure which has been built over it) has been kissed smooth by Jewish women. They still keep up the practice, and it is said that "they weep real tears and wail bitterly as they kiss the stone." Bethlehem was the home of Ruth and Boaz, and here their great grandson David was born.

143. **Gibeon** was five miles northwest of Jerusalem. This was the city whose citizens practised their shrewd deception on Joshua, and to whose defense Joshua marched from Gilgal and won his great victory over the five kings, pursuing them to Bethhoron and to Makkedah. East of Gibeon is probably the site of **Ramah,** Samuel's birthplace.

144. **Mizpah** means "Watch-tower." There were several Mizpahs in Canaan, but the one where Samuel called his great national assembly was not far from Gibeon at the place now called Neby Samwil. A Crusaders' Church, now in ruins, is said to have been built over the tomb of Samuel.

145. **Hebron** is half way between Jerusalem and Beersheba, and fifteen miles south of Bethlehem. Unlike all other towns of Judea, it is built, not on the top, but at the foot of a hill, but it extends up the slope so that the flat-roofed houses rise above one another. It is, nevertheless, higher than Jerusalem; its location is three thousand feet above the sea, as high as the top of Mount Ebal. Hebron shares with Damascus and Jaffa the reputation of being the oldest town in the world. Abraham's name, El Khalil, The Friend, is given by the Arabs to their modern town on this site. They are still using the same pool of water that all the people of Hebron have used since the days of Abraham. The Vale of Mamre was northwest of the city. In the time of Josephus a gigantic terebinth was claimed to be the one under which the Patriarch Abraham pitched his tent. The Cave of Machpelah and the surrounding field which was bought from the Hittite chief was Abraham's only possession at his death. Here were buried Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah and Jacob. The mosque above the tomb is, next to the tomb of Mohammed and the black stone at Mecca, the most sacred place in the world to all Moslems. Through a hole in the eastern wall, which is supposed to lead to the cave below, the modern Jews, it is said, thrust letters which they write to Abraham telling him how badly they are treated by the Moslems.

146. The Valley of Eshcol, whence the spies brought the bunch of grapes to Kadesh-barnea, is generally supposed to have been in the neighborhood of Hebron. The surrounding plateau is remarkably fertile.

147. In the days of Joshua the city was called Kirjath-arba. It was given to Caleb as a reward for his faithfulness, and he drove out the Anakim who dwelt there. It was one of the cities of refuge.

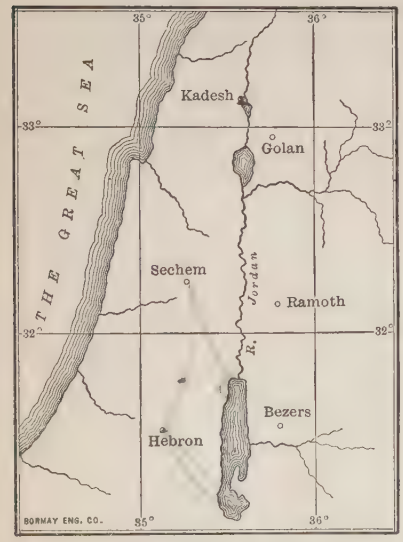
148. **Beersheba.** In the proverbial expression "From Dan to Beersheba," Beersheba is regarded as the southernmost place in Canaan, but there were several towns of the tribe of Simeon farther south. It was twenty-seven miles south of Hebron, on the great road between Canaan and Egypt. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived here at various times. Isaac passed the greater part of his life here, and from his covenant with Abimelech, the King of Gerar, came the name Beersheba — Well of the Oath. Wells dug in Abraham's day are still to be seen, and it is now the gathering place of a nomadic population. "Where the people come from it is hard to tell," says a recent traveler, "but from every side they are pouring in and pouring out, drawing and carrying away the precious water to their flocks and herds."

Nineteen miles southwest of Beersheba was **Rehoboth,** where there are still remains of wells.

149. **Places of the Jordan Valley. Gilgal** was the first camping ground of the Israelites and their headquarters whenever they went out to conquer the land. It was five miles from the Jordan and about three miles southeast of Jericho. Here the twelve stones taken from the dry river-bed at the time of their crossing were set up in a circle (Gilgal means circle) as a memorial. The first Passover in Canaan was celebrated at Gilgal, and the tabernacle remained here seven years.

150. **Jericho,** situated at the entrance of the two main passes into the central mountains, was the key of Canaan, and its possession essential to invaders coming from the east. It was the first city taken by the Israelites and was demolished by them.

151. **Cities of the Plain. Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah,** and **Zeboiim** were the cities of the plain which were destroyed because of their wickedness. It is thought that they were located at the northern end of the Salt Sea. They were in the "circle of the Jordan," a name given sometimes to the lower Jordan Valley, but referring in the scene between Abraham and Lot to the southern part, including the Salt Sea itself. When Lot chose the neighborhood of Sodom for himself, it was "well-watered everywhere as the garden of the Lord." To-day it is a barren and desolate plain. **Zoar** was the city to which Lot fled.



The Cities of Refuge

152. **Bethshean,** a strong city on the eastern end of the Plain of Esdraelon, was held by Israel's enemies throughout almost the whole of her history. The places mentioned in the story of Gideon's victory have not been identified, but they were in the Jordan Valley not far from Bethshean.

153. **The Cities of Refuge.** A glance at the diagram shows how wisely these six cities were situated so as to be within reach of all parts of the land.

LESSONS FOR 1907

STORIES OF THE PATRIARCHS AND JUDGES

GENESIS—I SAMUEL

FIRST QUARTER

LESSON I — JANUARY 6

GOD THE CREATOR

Gen. 1.1–25. (Read John 1.1–5.) Commit vv. 1–3.

Golden Text

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen. 1.1.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 1.1-25

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
4 And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.
6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.
7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so.
8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.
9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so.
10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas; and God saw that *it was* good.
11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.
12 And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.
13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.
14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:
15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
16 And God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also.

17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth.
18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good.
19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.
20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.
21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.
22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.
23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.
24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.
25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *In the beginning.* Compare John 1.1: "The Word *was,* when the world was *created.*" The Greek word, **Γένεσις**, Genesis, Creation, has given the book its title. *The heaven and the earth.* The universe. This first verse is the summary, the remainder of the chapter the detailed account, of the creation.

2. *Was.* At the time God "said," verse 3. *Without form.* R. V. (American Revised Version), *waste.* The Hebrew words translated "without form and void" are an alliterative description of a chaos in which nothing can be distinguished or defined. *Driver.* Formless, matterless. *Lange. The deep.* Not "the sea," but the mass of waters enclosing the formless earth. *The Spirit of God.* The unseen but mighty Agency by which creation was wrought. *Mitchell. Moved.* R. V. M. (Margin of the American Revised Version), *was brooding.* In Deut. 32.11, the same Hebrew word was used of an eagle hovering over its young. *Driver.*

3. *And God said.* God utters not grammatical words, but real and material things. Thus sun, moon, heaven, earth, I, and thou are scarcely to be reckoned words of God, yea, hardly a syllable and letter in comparison with the entire creation. *Luther.*

5. *God called the light day.* It is certainly not meant by this naming of things that words were known and in use before man's birth, but the meaning clearly is that, what God enables man to do — for speech and language are the gift of God — by a well understood rule God is said to do Himself. *Sime. The first day.* The account represents the work of God according to the image of human days. It lies, however, in the nature of a copy that it should correspond only on a very reduced scale with the immeasurable greatness of the original. *Delitzsch. And the evening and the morning were the first day.* R. V., *And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*

6–8. The "firmament" here is the atmosphere which bears up the clouds (the waters above) from the mass of water (the waters underneath) which still covers the earth.

10. *Earth.* In verse 1, this word signifies the "earth" as distinguished from the "heavens"; in this verse, "land" as distinguished from "seas."

11. *Grass, herb, fruit, tree.* All vegetable productions. *After his kind.* With its characteristics. In Old English *his* was used for *its*. *Whose seed is in itself.* R. V., *wherein is the seed thereof.*

14. *Let there be lights.* Light was in existence previously. Now luminous bodies are to come into existence, which, taking this light, *i. e.* a part of it, into themselves, shall at the same time regulate its influence upon the earth. *Dillmann. Firmament.* Here the word has a greater meaning than in verse 6. *Signs.* Even the heathen philosopher Plato says, that eyes are especially given to men that, by the observation of the heavenly bodies and their movements, they may be to them as guides to the knowledge of God. It is by the heavenly bodies that men judge of the weather; by their help they find their way on the water and on the land. *Luther.*

16. *Two great lights.* Great, not as compared with other heavenly bodies, but as regards their effect on the earth.

20. *Bring forth abundantly the moving creature.* R. V., *swarm with swarms of living creatures. Fowl.* R. V., *birds.*

21. *Whales.* R. V., *sea monsters.* The same Hebrew word is used for serpents in Ex. 7.9, and for crocodiles in Ezek. 29.3. *Browne.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *God created* — And God saw — And God called — And God made — And God set — And God blessed — God! *That* is the cause. *Joseph Parker.*

An astronomer named Athanasius Kircher had a friend who did not believe the world was made by God. The astronomer made an orrery — a representation of the sun surrounded by planets moving in their orbits around it — and showed it to his friend. "How beautifully this is made," his friend exclaimed, "who made it?" "No one made it," answered Kircher. "What do you mean?" "O, it came by chance." "That is impossible. Why are you trifling with me?" "Is it impossible?" said the astronomer. "I thought you told me that the planetary system, of which this is but a poor copy, came by chance. Why not this copy?"

3. *God said, Let there be light and there was light.* Longinus, a Greek writer of the third century, quotes this verse in his book *On the Sublime* as a "surpassing example of sublimity of thought and diction."

"Let there be light!" said God; and forthwith light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and, from her native East
To journey through the airy gloom began,
Sphered in a radiant cloud; for yet the sun
Was not: she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good. *Paradise Lost.*

5. *The first day.* In the immortal song of creation two facts are made clear: first, that God was the Creator, and second, that the creation was a gradual, a progressive movement. To aid human thought and to make impressive the idea of gradualness, the sacred writer introduces a time scale. This "day" of the first chapter of Genesis has nothing to do with an actual period, whether of twenty-four hours or twenty-four millions of years. It is a beautiful device — this use of a week of days and nights — to show that the creation was not instantaneous. The writer might have introduced any other time measurement.

He might have suggested years, or centuries, or cycles. But the most convenient, the simplest scale was the week of days — a figure to help us to the thought of continuous creative energy. *John H. Vincent.*

10. *God called the dry land earth.* The slow formation of the earth as taught by geology, the gradual development of species by the persistent accumulation of minute variations, made probable by modern biology, are but the exhibition in detail of those processes which the author of this cosmogony sums up into a single phrase and abruptly compresses into a single moment, for the purpose of declaring their dependence upon the divine will. *S. R. Driver.*

12. *Whose seed was in itself.* The astonishing power with which God has endued the vegetable creation to multiply its different species, may be instanced in the seed of the elm. This tree produces one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions of seeds; and each of these seeds has the power of producing the same number. *Adam Clarke.*

16. *He made the stars also.* Consider that all these heavenly bodies whirl in intricate courses! Consider their distance from us! The light of some of them has taken thousands of years to reach the earth, and if we could follow that light backward we should see the history of the world. Nay, if this whole world of ours were suddenly consumed, it would be an event of less importance in the universe than the fall of a single leaf in Central Park, or the loss of a single grain of sand. *Henry van Dyke.*

Who can look into the starry sky, thinking either of the multitude of worlds there or of the enormous tracts of space required by that multitude, and keep thoughts of God banished from the mind? *George Herbert Palmer.*

The spacious firmament on high
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim. *Addison.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *And the evening and the morning were the first day.* The "day" with the Jews was reckoned, not from midnight to midnight, but from the appearance of the stars in the evening to their appearance the next evening.

6. *Let there be a firmament.* The dome, or canopy, of heaven, which we, of course, know to be nothing but an optical illusion, was supposed by the Hebrews to be a solid vault (Job 37.18, "Canst thou like Him, beat out the skies, which are strong as a molten mirror?") supported far off by pillars resting upon the earth (Job 26.11; Amos 9.6; 2 Sam. 22.8); above this vault there were vast reservoirs of water, which came down in time of rain through open sluices (Gen. 7.11), and above these waters Jehovah sat enthroned. *S. R. Driver, Book of Genesis.*

14. *For signs and for seasons.* In Chaldea, the ancestral home of the sons of Abraham, the great lights of heaven were worshiped as themselves divine, and this lustrous celestial veil was drawn over the face of the Almighty and hid Him from His seeking children. May not Moses, then, have written from a religious, instead of a scientific point of view? May he not have made this repeated and emphatic assertion of the creation of sun, moon, and stars, and of their ministry to man, in order to withdraw the intercepting veil, in order to

teach us that we should worship no other gods than the Father of the lights, and to persuade us that even the glorious orbits of heaven, to which men once paid divine honors, are our servants and ministers, not our lords? *Almoni Peloni.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Old Testament World, paragraphs 1–4.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What special day of the year was last Tuesday? Why did we call it New Year's Day? It was the first day of what year? Why do we call this year 1907, instead of 1507, or some other number? We can think back to the year when Christ was born, and we know that that year was the beginning from which all the years since are reckoned. But we know that in the year when Christ was born more than nineteen hundred years ago, this earth was in existence just as it is to-day. There was a time, far back in the past, we do not know how many years before Christ came to earth, when the earth itself had a beginning. At that time, the beginning of all things, God alone existed. Our lesson to-day tells us something about the time when there was no earth, and the way in which God made the earth and all living things.

For Older Pupils. Genesis, the Book of Beginnings — how should such a book itself begin? The sacred historian has prefaced it with a Drama of Creation, a Pæan to the Creator. What could be more true or more sublime than this beginning!

At a time when very little was known of the great prehistoric period, when it was believed that the world happened, or was self-originated, when the nations around had no conception of the one true God, the inspired writer of the Hebrews gave an account of creation which all his contemporaries could grasp, and which we to-day find true and beautiful and good. Composed as it is of the best views, the best histories of that time in regard to the cosmogony, it is, moreover, shot through and through with the divine truth that the world was brought gradually, by progressive stages, to its present state, in obedience to the will of its Maker. The narrator's purpose was to show God's creative power; his object was, not to give manifold details of how the universe came into existence, but to declare that it did come into existence at the command of Jehovah; his concern was not to use scientifically precise language, but dramatically effective language.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. God's Gradual Revelations

The revelation of God in Genesis. George Macdonald has an exquisite little poem called *Baby's Catechism.*

"Where did you get your eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

Where did you get that pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear."

For its purpose what could be finer? Without a word of literal truth in it, it would convey to the child's mind exactly the right impression. Now imagine the nursery governess informing her pupils that ears never "came out" at all, and that hearing was really down inside. And yet this is precisely what interpreters of Genesis and interpreters of science do with the Bible. Genesis is a presentation of one or two great elementary truths to the childhood of the world. It can only be read aright in the spirit in which it was written, with its original purpose in view, and its original audience. What did it mean to them? What would they understand by it? What did they need to know and not to know? A scientific theory of the universe formed no part of the original writer's intention. Dating from the childhood of the world, written for children, and for that child-spirit in man which remains unchanged by time, it takes color and shape accordingly. Its object is purely religious, the point being, not how certain things were made, but that God made them. It is telling the world that the heaven and the earth and every creeping and flying thing were made by God.—*Henry Drummond.*

Such an account concerning the proceedings of things far back of any recorded history, as could be developed in its details at this age of the world, would have been absolutely useless to an early period, just as a treatise on optics would be of no use to children in the nursery; so if all that is included in geology, geography, botany, ethnology, and biology had been put into the account in Genesis in the early period, there would have been no one on earth competent to understand it.

The process by which, in the progressive painting of an oil portrait, are brought out, first the rude outline, then the crude filling in, and then the perfecting of every part, is the same process as that by which, under God's inspiration, the primitive races were developed from their primitive condition, until in these later days we have larger understanding and more comprehensive knowledge. . . . There is noonday revelation in the New Testament; in the Old Testament is early morning revelation. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

The Revelation of God in the Bible. Step by step the Bible record leads us from the revelation of God in the simple religion of a desert tribe to the sublime teachings of the Revealed Word. And the words of Christ Himself are revealed more clearly to age after age, as man gradually becomes better able to apprehend the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

This thought has been beautifully expressed by S. Baring-Gould in these words:

"You see before sunrise first a pale white streak in the East, over the dark line of sea, whilst stars are still twinkling in the sky overhead; and then by degrees, as the light grows, trees and branches, which were before buried in the darkness, you see stand out sharply against the whitening sky: the stars now disappear; and presently over the sea rays of light rise up and touch the clouds, which blush with joy, and then, lo! they flame, and out of the waters rises a burning globe—the sun is risen, it is day.

"Just as all this happens, so it was with Christ's coming. Long, long before He appeared on the earth, the first faint streak of light appeared. He spake to Abraham and gave him a glimpse of the truth. Then the light brightened.

Moses had a fuller revelation, and the Israelites who went up out of Egypt saw more clearly the truth than had Abraham and the old patriarchs. And perhaps you may have noticed how much more there is of Christ in the Psalms than in any words of Moses, and again how much fuller and brighter grows the light in the prophets, as time speeds on and the rising of the Day Star approaches. The eyes of men's minds were being gradually prepared by God to see the splendor of Christ, of God manifest in the flesh."

The Revelation of God to Us. Have you ever stood behind the mighty Niagara cataract and had your ears almost stunned by its terrible roar? Have you ever marveled at the wonderful silence of the forest on some mid-summer day when not a breath of air seemed stirring? Yet that silence, Huxley tells us, is only a seeming silence: it exists only because of the dullness of our hearing; could our ears but catch "the murmur of the tiny maelstroms as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living cells, which constitute each tree, we should be stunned with the roar of a great city."

God's revelation to us is limited only by our capacity to apprehend that revelation. "There is no one so ignorant, so careless, so indifferent about what God is and what God is doing, that God is not all the time pressing upon that man's life and crowding into it all the knowledge of Himself that it will take," says Phillips Brooks. "As the air crowds upon everything, upon the solidest and hardest stone, and upon the softest and most porous earth, and into each presses what measure of itself each will receive, so God limits the revelation of Himself by nothing but by the capacity of every one to take and hold His revelation. Remember, God is teaching you always just as much truth as you can learn. Be capable of more knowledge and it shall be given to you. What hinders you from knowing God perfectly is not God's unwillingness but your imperfectness. Grow better and purer, and divine wisdom shall come to you, not given as wages, as reward, but simply admitted into a nature grown more capable of receiving it. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

II. Order is Heaven's First Law

The Divinity of Order. God was represented as evolving harmony from discord, as repressing the unruly elements and bringing them into obedience. And herein men were taught the divine character of order; that it is the law of man's existence; that the unregulated or unruly heart is like the ship with an insubordinate crew which is wrecked on the ocean; that order is to pervade the church, to rule the state, to regulate the family, to influence man's personal happiness. *F. W. Robertson.*

The Beauty of Order. Pope well proclaims that "Order is Heaven's first law." The more we study God's universe, the better we see the beauty of this law. A short time ago astronomers told us of the proximity of Mars and Saturn, the relative position of these planets which occurs but once in six thousand years. With what unerring precision are their paths marked out, and with what regularity do they follow their appointed courses!

"How sour sweet music is when time is broke and no proportion kept," says Shakespeare. We all know there is no beauty in music when one part is not rightfully ordered as regards another part, when time beats are out of order — such music is, in truth, "sour."

Whittier speaks of "the calm beauty of an ordered life." The first Sunday

in January is a good time to recognize the beauty of the principle of order in our own lives.

The Value of Order. If the characters of great men were analyzed more closely than they generally are before judgment was passed upon them, "He was a systematic man" would be substituted often, I dare say, for the vague words, "He was a genius." Napoleon astonished the sovereigns of Europe at the Congress of Erfurt by the minuteness of his knowledge of historic data; and when he was asked the secret, he answered: "My knowledge is deposited in drawers. I have only to open a particular drawer, orderly marked, and all that I have learned on a particular subject is at hand." Commissioners of insolvency say that the books of nine bankrupts out of ten are found to be in a muddle. If we desire success to attend our efforts, let us adopt a carefully conceived system in all of our work. *H. Allen Tupper.*

Successful Work must be Orderly. He who every morning plans the transactions of the day and follows out that plan, carries a thread that will guide him through the labyrinth of the most busy day. The orderly arrangement of his time is like a ray of light which darts itself through all his occupations. But where no plan is laid, where the disposal of time is surrendered merely to the chance of incidents, all things lie huddled together in one chaos, which admits of neither distribution nor review. *Victor Hugo.*

III. The World Is Good

God saw that it was Good. If we were to rewrite this story, should we not, simply by introducing omitted facts into it, give it a wholly different moral tone? As thus: — "God divided the light from the darkness; and God said, Let there be a pestilence that walketh in darkness, and heats that scorch and smite at noon. God divided the air from the waters; and God said, Let the waters roar and be troubled, and let the winds rave and destroy. God divided the earth from the seas; and God said, Let the earth be scattered over with deserts of salt and sand."

Despite our knowledge of evil, we say, "The world is a good world, a very good world, to those who are good enough to live in it."

Much that we call evil in Nature is certainly good, or contributes to the general good. It has been justly said that if every man were able, and were permitted, to destroy whatever he did not like, whatever he held to be evil to him, there would be nothing left; even those things which are recognized as of the most general use would be banished from the world by the dislike, by the distempered appetite, or the foolish mistakes of this man or that. How often we are told of farmers who have shot down the birds of their district, because these small things of the air have injured, or have been supposed to injure their crops — only to discern by the immense multiplication of grubs and caterpillars, who do them far worse harm, that they have destroyed, not their enemies, but their friends.

The world is a good world; for good largely predominates in the world. Though there is much in it that tells of evil, even the evil in it points to larger ultimate good. The storms bring us a purer air and fruitful showers; earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are but the occasional outbreaks of the gracious interior fire which keeps the surface of the earth warm and fertile all the year round; autumnal decay enriches the soil. *Almoni Peloni,* in *The Expositor.*

Cultivate the Ability to see the Beauty of This World. "Last summer I was talking with one of the foremost contemporary Scotch writers," said Hamilton W. Mabie in an address, "and I said to him: 'Is there not a great deal of poetry among the commonest and most uneducated people in Scotland?'

"Said he: 'They are saturated with it.'

"One day in the early spring he was walking along the side of a mountain in Skye, when he came to a hut in which lived an old man he had known a great many years. He saw the old man with his head bowed and his bonnet in his hand. My friend came up and said to him after a bit:

"'I did not speak to you, Sandy, because I thought you might be at your prayers.'

"'Well, not exactly that,' said the old man; 'but I tell you what I was doing. Every morning for forty years I have taken off my bonnet here to the beauty of the world!'"

The little child in one of George Macdonald's books who, while gazing at a gorgeous sunset, exclaimed, "O, mamma, how I would like to help God to paint the sky!" had this same ability to see the beauty of God's world.

Said the great botanist Linnæus, "In the unfolding blossom I saw God in His glory passing near me, and I bowed my head in worship." Shall we not live this year with eyes opened to see God's glory everywhere, and His creative hand in all created things?

Be Grateful for the World's Beauty.

Our God, we thank Thee, Thou hast made
The earth so bright,
So full of splendor and of joy,
Beauty and light.
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right. *A. A. Proctor.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The Bible shows its inspiration by inspiring. *Alexander McKenzie.*

Without method, little can be done to any good purpose. *Macaulay.*

God is the perfect Poet,
Who in creation acts His own conceptions. *Browning.*

Better to believe that the world was created in six solar days than to doubt whether it was created at all. *W. H. P. Faunce.*

Moral changes are slow: God's footsteps are sometimes centuries apart. *Edwin Taylor.*

The world we're passing through is God's world as much as any we're ganging to. *Edmund Garret.*

As man grows in good, so grows his idea of God. *Marcus Dods.*

Nature is but a name for an effect whose cause is God. *Cowper.*

God's in His Heaven;
All's right with the world. *Browning.*

The intention of Holy Scripture is to tell us how to go to Heaven, and not how the heavens go. *Cardinal Baronius.*

After years of watching the processes of nature I can no more doubt the ex-

istence of an Intelligence that is running things than I do of the existence myself. *Thomas A. Edison.*

The mind ought not to rush with heedlessness or violence upon a book like Genesis, if only for the one reason that it is Genesis, and not Finis. *Joseph Parker.*

If we remove the term God from this chapter, we leave behind a mystery of darkness; when we reinsert the term God we import a nobler mystery of light. *Joseph Parker.*

The highest type of life is that of the man who breathes his spirit on the chaotic conditions around him and makes order out of them, who takes the raw material of life and creates something that but for him would not have existed. *Sunday School Times.*

If all knowledge is defective, and if in every department of research barriers are set at some point to the progress of discovery, how unreasonable to cry out against Christian theology, because the Bible does not reveal everything, and because everything that the Bible does reveal is not yet ascertained. *George Park Fisher.*

I like the superb organ tones of those primeval words of the primal book, "In the beginning God," there reason and imagination rest; at the first, before all things, or even creation had issued into the void of space, was the Eternal, the Almighty. *Alexander McKenzie.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Psa. 90.2.

He hath made everything beautiful in his time. Eccles. 3.11.

Let all things be done decently and in order. 1 Cor. 14.40.

One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 2 Pet. 3.8.

The glory of the Lord shall endure forever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. Psa. 104.31.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Heb. 11.3.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. John 1.1–3.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

When Napoleon was returning from his Egyptian campaign and was pacing the deck of the ship one night, officers came to him with this question, "Is there a God?" For answer, Napoleon pointed to the starry firmament and said, "Gentlemen, who made all this?" We know it would take a railway train, traveling at the rate of forty miles an hour, eight thousand, five hundred years to reach the planet Neptune, and fifty-two million years to reach the nearest fixed star, while Sir William Herschel has estimated that in the "Milky Way" the stars lie in a stratum five hundred times as thick as the distance from earth to

the nearest fixed star! Could this vast universe "happen," could it "come by chance?"

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

THE LESSON STORY

In the beginning God created the universe. There was a time when God alone existed. When the earth was formless and enveloped in water, and all was darkness, God created light, decreeing that light and darkness, day and night, should alternate. This was the first stage in the progressive creation, the work of the first day. The second day God caused the atmosphere to separate the water in the clouds above from the water over the still formless earth beneath. Two creative acts crowned the third day: the solid element, the earth, appeared, for the waters were collected in the seas, and it brought forth vegetable life. On the fourth day God created the sun and the moon and the stars. The fifth day the fishes of the sea and the birds of the air were called into being. The sixth day the beasts of the earth were created, and all was ready for the coming of man. Thus in a dignified and impressive way the truth was taught in these opening verses of Genesis that the world came from God, and that it was fashioned by His will in a gradual and orderly way.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The truth and sublimity of the account in Genesis of the creation compared with other cosmogonies.

2. The existence of the world is a fact which admits of no further explanation, and he who seeks to go behind the free will of God in quest of some anterior force out of which he fancies the world to have been derived, lands in a dreary pantheism, satisfying neither his reason nor his heart. *George Park Fisher.*

3. In a Chinese picture there is no perspective; things near and things far are alike represented on a flat surface. We must not make the mistake of viewing the sixty-six books of the Bible in a similar way. The perspective, the historical unfolding of God's messages, must be brought out.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the 104th Psalm, "the Psalm of Creation." 2. Give the ten separate creative acts of God in their order by "days." 3. What is the meaning of the words "made in the image of God?" 4. What is the purpose of the two similar phrases in verse 27? Compare Gen. 10.5,20,31,32;25.16. 5. How many blessings are recorded in the lesson? 6. Which of the Ten Commandments is in regard to keeping the Sabbath day holy? Repeat the entire commandment. 7. In Ex. 35.2, 3; 16.5, 23; Neh. 10.31; and 13.15–21, read the Old Testament laws in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath. 8. On what occasions did the Jews accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath? (Mark 2.23–28; Luke 6.1–11; 13.10–17; John 5.1–18.) 9. What three principles did Jesus give in regard to keeping the Sabbath? (Luke 6.9; Mark 2.27, 28.)

MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Gen. 1.26–2.3. (Study Gen. 2.4–25.) Commit vv. 26, 27.

Golden Text

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him. Gen. 1.27.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 1.26–2.3

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, I *have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

26. *Let us make.* Hebrew possesses what is called a "plural of majesty": the words for "Lord" "Master," even when applied to a single person, are often plural for the purpose of carrying the ideas of dignity and greatness; the usual Hebrew word for God (Elohim) is, similarly, as a rule, plural: hence it might well be that, on a solemn occasion like this, when God is represented as about to create a being in His own "image," He should adopt this unusual and significant mode of expression. *Driver.*

In like manner the courtesy of modern ages has substituted the pronoun *you*, which is properly a plural pronoun used with a plural verb, for the singular pronoun *thou*, when speaking to only one person.

27. *God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* These synonymous phrases are used to emphasize the thought of the resemblance between God and man. There is in man a spiritual element which is "the image of God."

28. *Replenish.* Not fill again, but fill, cause to abound.

29. *Every herb — every tree.* All grains, vegetables, and fruits of trees. *Meat.* R. V., *food.* In Old English meat did not mean merely the flesh of animals, but food in general.

30. *Every green herb for meat.* Rather, all the green of herbs (*i. e.* the leaves) for food. The writer portrays an ideal. *Driver.*

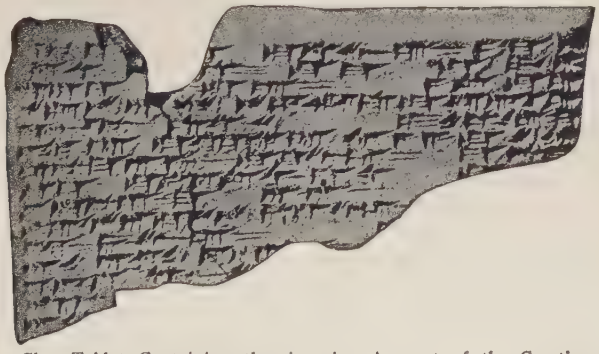
1. *Thus.* R. V., *And. All the host of them.* The host of heaven and earth means all the component items of which they are composed, conceived as constituting an organized whole. *Driver.*

2. *Ended.* R. V., *finished.* God finished His work on the seventh day by not continuing it on that day. *His work which he had made.* The work of creation. *Rested.* He now rested, not with the intent of thenceforth withdrawing from the world, — He was indeed from that time onwards the Governor of the world and the Director of its history — but He rested as Creator; His creative energy was now concluded, His rest belongs to that order of the world which is binding upon His creatures. *Delitzsch.*

3. *God blessed the seventh day.* Gave it a dignity and honor peculiar to itself, above that of the other days of the week. *Sanctified.* R. V., *hallowed.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

26. *And God said.* True to the simplicity of the early ages of mankind, the relations of men to the Almighty are represented in Scripture in language suited to such a state of society. Instead of speaking of God in lofty and mysterious



Clay Tablet Containing the Assyrian Account of the Creation
In the British Museum

terms; then quite unintelligible and hardly less so now; Scripture habitually ascribes to Him the actions, emotions, and language which men themselves would use in similar circumstances. He is described as speaking the creative words; as pronouncing the curse in human language; as holding judgment on Cain in direct arraignment and condemnation; as repenting that He had made man on earth, and as grieved at His heart, as directing Noah in the details of the plan of the ark, and as making a covenant with him, in human speech, after the Deluge. It is not, however, to be thought from such modes of expression, that human characteristics are intended to be ascribed to the Creator. In any age it is necessary to describe the unknown by the help of the known, and as the mysterious Personality of God must ever be incomprehensible to man, there is no way in which we can represent His relation to

us, except by using words borrowed from our own faculties, emotions, and modes of action. . . . The whole Bible, alike, impresses on us the remembrance that human attributes ascribed to God are only figures of speech; for Moses expressly forbids any representation of Him. *Cunningham Geikie.*

Let us make man in our image. It is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast than between the heathen accounts of the origin of all things and the Scriptural narrative. The former are so full of the grossly absurd that no one could regard them as other than fables; while the latter is so simple and yet so full of majesty, as almost to force us to "worship and bow down" and to "kneel before the Lord our Maker." And as this was indeed the object in view, and not scientific instruction, far less the gratification of our curiosity, we must expect to find in the first chapter of Genesis simply the grand outlines of what took place, and not any details connected with creation. *Alfred Edersheim.*

27. *So God created man.* The book of Genesis, by a careful chronology, carries the human family back by named generations to the creation of the first man, in 4219 B. C., or — according to the Greek version which makes the ages of the Patriarchs much greater at the birth of their sons than the Hebrew does — to 5408 B. C. But recent discoveries in Babylonia and Egypt prove that in both of these great river valleys man lived and had already developed considerable culture at a date long anterior to those dates. *George Adam Smith.*

The date given by Ussher is 4004 B. C. Authorities now give the date as "not less than 7000 B. C." ; many place it far earlier than this.

God created man in his own image. God formed man of the dust of the ground. 2.7. Whatever the result of careful scientific investigation may be, I am sure of two things. The first is that no scientific theory can assign a more humble origin to man's physical nature than that which is already assigned by the Scripture. The Lord made man of the dust of the earth. The first man is of the earth, earthy. And, on the other hand, I am quite sure that no scientific theory will permanently endure which makes this lowly origin, and this relationship to the inanimate world, a blot on the spiritual glory, and a bar to the lofty destiny of the human race. God made man in His own image, and gave him dominion over all creatures. *Henry van Dyke.*

3. *He rested.* Not that the divine activity really ceased or that the Divine Being needed rest, but to show that the weekly pause from earth's duties to let the soul lift itself to God is a divine institution, and has been sanctified and hallowed from above. *A. S. Aglen.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Old Testament world, paragraphs 5–7.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In a very ancient book called the *Book of Jubilees* there is a legend about a conversation held by Abraham with a king. "Let us worship fire," said the king. "Rather," replied Abraham, "the water that quenches the fire." "Well, the water." "Rather the cloud that carries the water." "Well, the cloud." "Rather the wind that scatters the cloud." "Well, the wind." "Rather man, for he endures the wind." "Well,

the man." "Rather God, who made fire and water, and cloud, and wind, and man."

For Older Pupils. (The book of Genesis. See the Introduction.)

It is not, indeed, necessary to suppose that the whole book of Genesis is an original composition of the great law-giver, Moses. On the contrary, its compiler evidently availed himself of the existing documents, as in the story of creation, of which a first account extends to the third verse of the second chapter, while a second account occupies the verses following. Moses was evidently inspired to supplement the one account by the other, and thus made a fuller revelation, apparently from two primeval sources, than one by itself would have furnished. But it is only a question of literary interest, at best, to discuss the extent to which he may have been divinely led to employ materials already inviting his selection. Some portions he must have received by direct inspiration; others may have been derived from earlier documents or even traditions, purified from whatever was unworthy; others from personal knowledge. In any case, the book as it stands is to us the very word of God, speaking as only He could, through His servants, to mankind. *Cunningham Geikie, Hours with the Bible.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I God Created Man in His Own Image

Life's One Charge. In the Gallerie des Beaux Arts in Paris there stands a famous statue. It was the last work of a great genius, who, like many a genius, was poor and lived in a garret, which served as a studio and a sleeping room alike. When the statue was all but finished, one midnight a sudden frost fell upon Paris. The sculptor lay awake in the fireless room, and thought of the still moist clay, how the water would freeze in the pores and destroy in an hour the dream of his life. So the old man rose from his couch and heaped the bedclothes reverently round his work. In the morning when the neighbors entered the room, the sculptor was dead. But the statue lived. The image of Christ that is forming within us — that is life's one charge. Let every project stand aside for that. *Henry Drummond, The First Experiment.*

What the Face Told. Two young girls in the parlors of a celebrated photographer were waiting, somewhat impatiently, their turn for a sitting. When the studio door was finally opened and two middle-aged ladies emerged, the eyes of the girls ran swiftly over the face and figure of the one who had evidently been before the camera.

"Dear me! All this time wasted on her?" whispered one pair of rosy lips. "When I get to be as old and homely as that I'll not bother with having pictures taken, I can tell you."

But the artist was even then expressing to a friend his satisfaction with his sitter.

"I like to take that kind of picture — a face that is full of character," he said. "That patient steadfastness in the eyes, the strong lines about the mouth, will come out finely. Pretty faces are plentiful enough — they mean nothing except that care and time have not yet touched them — but strong, sweet faces have to be slowly chiseled out, year by year, by some workman within."

So the careless young girl is even now deciding what her face of the future

shall be, and somewhere, whether she chooses or not, it will be plainly pictured. *The Wellspring.*

Faces which have lost the Divine Image. Isaiah said of the wicked inhabitants of Jerusalem that "the show of their countenance doth witness against them." What countless faces there are now in which the divine element has been wholly obscured!

"Beautiful faces are those that wear —
It matters little if dark or fair —
Whole-souled honesty printed there.
Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes, where earth fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below."

"It is said there is no thought that is good in the mind but soon looks good in the face," says Doctor Hillis. "Heart qualities are artists that work, indeed, behind the screen, yet at last they strike through the canvas and become manifest in the facial illumination. Contrariwise, men that are so long inured to vice and crime that sinful thoughts within have so disposed of the facial tissue without as that the countenance has in it something of the wolf, and something of the imp, and something of the crawling serpent."

God's Conception of Man. He who has never seen the vegetable world except in Arctic regions has but a poor idea of the majesty of vegetable life — a microscopic red moss tinting the surface of snow, a few stunted pines, and here and there, perhaps, a dwindled oak; but to the botanist who has seen the luxuriance of vegetation in its tropical magnificence, all that wretched scene presents another aspect; to him these dwarfs are the representations of what might be, nay, what has been in a kindlier soil and a more genial climate. We are feeble, dwarfish, stunted specimens of humanity. Our best resolves are but withered branches, our holiest deeds unripe and blighted fruit; but to the Supreme Eye, who sees in the perfect One the type and assurance of that which shall be, this dwindled humanity of ours is divine and glorious. *F. W. Robertson.*

What a difference between the Adam of Genesis and the John of the Apocalypse! It is easy to believe that John was made in the image and likeness of God. What eyes the man had, and ears, and power of dreaming great dreams, and in how sublime contempt he held all things called great on earth! Look at that seer, if you would know in whose image and likeness man was created and made. If we would see God's conception of man, we must look upon the face of His Son — He of whom is said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Look to Him if you would see the image and likeness of God. Look to Him if you would estimate the value of man. We have to bear His image; we have to be what He is. Look at Him, and say, each of you, That is what I have to be like! *Joseph Parker, People's Bible.*

II Man Has Two Creators — God and Himself

What Each Creator does. The first Creator furnishes man the raw material of his life and the laws in conformity with which he can make that life what he will. The second creator — himself — has marvelous powers he rarely realizes. It is what a man makes of himself that counts. *William George Jordan.*

With your God-given will, you may dispose yourself in opposition to your disposition. This can be done. No man is the slave of his disposition in a world where the divine will and the human will together can do eventually what they please. Temperament is wax before the human will and God. Natural traits are powerless before moral decisions. You are not responsible for the disposition you are born with, but for the disposition you die with. It can be changed. Family characteristics may be chosen or repudiated by the determination of the character-builder. Heredity is powerful; but human choice has God within reach. With God all things are possible; Saul becomes Paul; human nature is changed. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Heredity and Free Choice. Heredity is undoubtedly a real and powerful force. It supplies the outfit of life. But does it determine the use which we shall make of it? The very extension of the doctrine by the investigations of science dissolves this narrow and absolute conclusion. We inherit from thousands, from hundreds of thousands, of ancestors. The blood of many families and tribes and races is mingled in our veins. What is it that decides which of these many lines we shall follow? It must be either blind chance or free choice. All the phenomena of society, all the facts of consciousness, are in favor of the latter supposition. We see men whose heritage is of the lowest and worst, working their way up, by sheer strength of moral choice and effort, to a higher plane. We see men whose heritage is of the loftiest and the best, declining to the very depths of infamy. It is true that a man can not bring out of himself what is not there already. But it is true also, by virtue of heredity, that there are many potential men in every man, and which of them is to emerge, he chooses for himself by a thousand silent moral preferences; by yielding or by resisting; by the cowardice and corruption, or by the courage and purification of his own free-will. *Henry van Dyke, The Gospel for an Age of Doubt.*

Where the Responsibility for a Life Rests.

Oh, awful and inspiring thought!
That 'tis not God but we
Who, in this life, make for ourselves
Our own eternity. *Frank Strickland.*

"They can talk all they please, but I can still do as I please," said a youth with whom his friends had been remonstrating. Yes, he could do as he pleased; therein lay his great responsibility. It depended upon himself alone what he should make of his life here and hereafter.

On the stone that marks the spot where Emerson rests are chiseled these words:

"The passive master that lent his hand
To the massive Soul that o'er him planned."

Is not this a beautiful thought; God and Emerson working together! Does not each one lend a hand to the Soul that plans his life? We need only to take life just as God gives it to us and then to make it as beautiful as we can.

III God Blessed the Seventh Day

Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep it Holy. The holier you keep that day the happier you will be all the days of your life. Work requires more than

time; it requires force. That is why it doesn't pay to work Sundays. What is gained in time is more than lost in force.

To select an interesting Sabbath book, and to read it, a page each all round, is a tried and sure way of instructing a Sabbath-day family. To give each member of your family a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress,* for instance; then to read all round a page each; then to copy each into his own neat little note-book the happy expressions, and the striking names of the people and places you have met with in your home reading, and then to index them all carefully; for my family and for myself I have never discovered any more delightful way of spending a Sabbath hour than something like that. *Alexander Whyte.*

The Best Use of Sunday. Few of us realize what life would be with monotony of work seven days in the week. There are forces in our business life which are pushing toward this for large classes of workers, but they are more than offset by other forces of public opinion and class interest. The American people, we are safe in saying, so far as public convenience will allow, mean to keep one day in seven free from the claims of secular business. The most difficult problems relate to travel and the transportation of freight and the supply of the Sunday needs of the crowded inhabitants of our great cities. But the great railways are seeking in the interest of the efficiency of their workmen to reduce Sunday work, as is instanced by a recent order of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway stopping the movement of dead freight on Sunday, which is said to have released some six thousand men from work on that day.

The best use of Sunday will not, however, admit of mere idleness. Rest comes rather from change of occupation than from mere cessation of activity. The wholly idle day belongs to the necessities of illness. On the other days of the week we work because we must; on the Lord's Day we should taste the delight of putting heart and soul into unpaid but joyful occupation. Worship is a part of this good use of Sunday and the companionship of worship.

The Lord's Day, like the Jewish Sabbath which it replaces, is a feast and not a fast, a day of joy and not of sorrow, a day to use for ministry of pity and of service.

The ideal Sunday will be, above all, the Lord's Day. We shall rejoice in leisure because it permits of undivided attention to work and worship that are crowded out on other days. The spirit of rest will be its portion. Even in sacred things we shall not allow ourselves to be perturbed or hurried. The joy of the Lord — which is the joy of service — will remain with us. *The Congregationalist.*

True to his Convictions. Stephen Girard made no pretense of religion himself, and showed scant courtesy for the religion of other men. And yet Stephen Girard had profound respect for the religion that made men faithful. One Saturday he ordered his clerks to come the following day and unload a vessel which had just arrived. It was no work of necessity or mercy. It merely suited the millionaire's convenience that the vessel should be unloaded as quickly as possible, and sent to sea again. One of his clerks had strong convictions, and courage to act upon them.

"I am not accustomed to do unnecessary work on Sunday," said he, "and I can not come." Mr. Girard was astonished; he was not accustomed to disobedience, and had no mind to tolerate it. He told the young man that unless he could obey instructions he must give up his position, and the young man went.

For three weeks the discharged man walked the streets of Philadelphia look-

ing for a position. His mother was perilously near want, and the question forced itself upon him repeatedly whether his convictions had required of him so great a sacrifice.

When he was almost discouraged a message from the president of a new bank came to him, offering him the position of cashier. Very gratefully he accepted it, and later he learned that it was Stephen Girard who had nominated him for the position. The bank president had asked Mr. Girard if he could find him a suitable man for the place, and Mr. Girard, after some reflection, named this young man. The banker was surprised that he should name a man whom he had lately discharged.

"I discharged him," said Mr. Girard, "because he would not work on Sunday; but the man who will lose his situation from principle is the man whom you can trust with your money."

Even men who have no religion of their own appreciate in others convictions that make them faithful. *Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

I am not what I seem; I am spirit clothed upon. *Henry Wood.*

The man who lives with God is a glorious climax of creation. *Sunday School Times.*

My business is not to remake myself,
But make the absolute best of what God made. *Browning.*

God holds you responsible for your nature plus your nurture, for yourself plus your possibilities. *Malbie Babcock.*

Let never day or night unhallowed pass,
But still remember what the Lord has done. *Shakespeare.*

I thank God that I was born a man, and not a beast; that I was born a Grecian and not a barbarian. *Plato.*

Great is this marble, greater still the hand that carved it; greatest of all the God who fashioned the sculptor. *Michael Angelo.*

The law of the Sabbath is the law of a Being who never rests from doing good. *Chrysostom.*

The Sabbath is to give us a chance to do what we like to do — to carry out our own character: the use we make of it shows whether our character is Christlike or not. *Selected.*

God gives to each soul personally the keeping of his own destiny and bids him unlock life's closed doors; puts in his hands the rudder and bids him steer his bark; gives him the tools and bids him model his own character. *Lyman Abbott.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Psa. 33.5.

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Mal. 2.10.

And as we have borne the image of the earthly so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 1 Cor. 15.49.

Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. John 5.17.

He that built all things is God. Heb. 3.4.

He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. Acts 17.25.

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. 1 Cor. 8.6.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4.6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. "It is a great privilege to be young," says Charles Dudley Warner. "It is a great opportunity. The world is all before you, and you can make it for yourselves, substantially, what you will." There is a special promise for you in the Bible,— Those that seek me early shall find me.

When a friend asked Wendell Phillips if he had ever given himself to God, Phillips replied, "Yes, when I was a boy fourteen years of age, in the old church at the North End, I had heard Lyman Beecher preach on the theme, You Belong to God. I went home after that service, threw myself on the floor in my room, with locked doors, and prayed, "O God, I belong to Thee. Take what is Thine own. I ask this, that whenever a thing is wrong, it may have no power of temptation over me, and that whenever a thing is right, it may take no courage to do it." From that day it has been so. Whenever a thing has been known to me to be wrong, it has held no temptation for me; and whenever I have known a thing to be right, it has taken no courage to do it."

THE LESSON STORY

Having made the earth and furnished it with vegetable life and the lower animal life, God creates man in His own image, and crowns him with the right of dominion. God now seemingly surveys all that He has made and pronounces it good. The earth that was without form and void has been given shape and furnished with living creatures. Man is placed upon the earth to subdue it, to use its products for his welfare. God has made man with a nature allied to His; there are possibilities in him which may make him more and more like God.

God is satisfied; He rests from His labors, and the last scene in the drama of creation closes with God's blessing on this seventh day.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Man needs less of the "I am a feeble worm of the dust" idea in his theology, and more of the conception "I am a great human soul with marvelous possibilities" as a vital element in his daily, working religion. *William George Jordan.*

2. What is Evolution? Mr. Huxley said: "The hypothesis that the successive series of animals and plants have arisen, the later by the gradual modification of the earlier." So stated it is simply a theory as to the genesis or origin of species, of the way in which they came to be. Evolution must have life before it can trace its multiplication and development, must have both "organism and environment" before it can show us the genesis of species and

the descent of man. Evolution determines and can determine nothing as to the cause, it simply describes the process. The way in which nature makes is her way of declaring the presence of her Maker. *A. M. Fairbairn, The City of God.*

3. Query. Is it a duty of a Christian to keep his faculties fresh for Sunday worship, even if it envolves doing a little less on Saturday: and is there very much difference between the Sunday worker and the Sunday sleeper? *Living Church.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. By whose means does John say that Judas was led to betray Christ? (John 13.2.) 2. What did John the Baptist call the Pharisees in Matt. 3.7? In what way was this an appropriate term? 3. What is "the tree which is in the midst of the garden," verse 3, called? (Gen. 2.17.) 4. Compare the expression "dust shalt thou eat" in verse 14, a figurative expression for abject humiliation, with similar figurative expressions in Isa. 49.23; Psa. 72.7; Psa. 102.9. 5. Tell the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15.11–32), and show how both the parable and the story of the Fall alike teach that man wishes to be independent of God, and that he sins through his self-will. 6. Read the account of Christ's temptation in Luke 4.1–13. 7. Compare the way in which Eve met her temptation, and the way in which Christ met His. 8. Read Rom. 3.10–25.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

There are two accounts in Genesis of the creation. The second account, 2.4–25, reads somewhat like a summary of the first account with further details added. It is not uncommon in the Scriptures to find the same event given in two or more narrations. The second account is concerned not with the origin of the universe as a whole, but with the origin of the first inhabitants. It states that "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul," and "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman." It mentions also the Garden of Eden in which man was first placed; the four rivers; the tree of knowledge of good and evil, whose fruit was to be a constant temptation to them, testing their obedience to the divine command "Thou shalt not eat of it," and the naming of the animals by Adam.

LESSON III — JANUARY 20

MAN'S SIN AND GOD'S PROMISE

Gen. 3.1–6, 13–15. (Study the chapter.) Commit v. 15.

Golden Text

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. 15.22.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 3.1–6, 13–15

1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The serpent.* The power of evil personified. The tempter is called by the Jews "the old serpent." (See Rev. 12.9.) The devil was the murderer of man from the beginning, John 8.44. *Subtil.* Fittest imp of fraud. *Milton. Yea.* Indeed, truly. The interrogative sentence is also exclamatory, and is designed to arouse distrust of God.

2. *We may eat.* R. V., *Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat.* This latter order of words brings out the thought that Eve resents the serpent's subtle meaning.

3. *The tree which is in the midst of the garden.* The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (2.17.)

4. *Ye shall not surely die.* Eve seems to have expected death would immediately follow the eating of the forbidden fruit.

5. *Your eyes shall be opened.* Not to save you from death, but to prevent your being like Him, has God prohibited you from partaking of this fruit. *As gods.* R. V., *As God.* The Hebrew word *Elohim* is plural in form. "It

stands at times for false gods, at times for angels, but most commonly for the one true God."

8–13. The investigation made by God. 14–19. The Sentence.

14. *Thou art cursed.* As the serpent was but the outward form of the spirit of evil, so the language of the Almighty, which outwardly refers to the serpent, in its spiritual significance is a curse upon the evil one. *Browne. Above.* Out of, among. *Dust shalt thou eat.* Not that the serpent shall henceforth live on dust, but, writhing in it, it shall naturally "lick the dust." (Compare Micah 7.17.)

15. *Bruise.* The meaning of the word translated "bruise" is most uncertain. But the sense of the passage is plain. The snake is to attack man's heel, man is to attack the serpent's head. *Addis.* This verse, more plainly than verse 14, shows that the serpent stands for the power of evil. There is to be constant warfare between humanity and the power of evil. This first promise of victory over sin, indefinite and general as it reads, is the first Messianic promise of redemption.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *The serpent said unto the woman.* There are two places in the Bible where the entrance of evil and the fall of man are described — and they both teach the same lesson: Christ's parable of the Prodigal Son and the story of Adam's lost Paradise. In both stories the birthplace of the evil is hidden. The serpent that tempted Eve, and the far country that allured the Prodigal, are symbols of a mystery. In both stories the entrance of evil is through self-will — blind, perverse, ruinous, but free, and therefore responsible. In both stories the nature of the evil is rebellion, self-injury, separation from God. In both stories the result of the evil in man's heart is the sense of sin.

Adam's story stops there, but the Prodigal's story goes on to salvation. *Henry van Dyke,* in *The Gospel for a World of Sin.*

3. *The tree which is in the midst of the garden.* What does the story mean? Certainly nobody can read it and not be sure that the element of allegory is very large in it. Whatever literal elements may correspond to it at the beginning or at the end of the human history, certainly that losing and finding again of the tree of life may be taken to represent the course of man's career in spiritual things, the way in which the race and the individual are trained and punished and rewarded. . . . The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents that mottled and mingled experience of life by which men's lives are formed, their understandings opened, their characters decided. To eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil — what is it but to go through just what you and I have gone through ever since we were children? It is to deal with life; to come, by contact with the world, to judgments of what is good and what is bad. In one word, to have had experience is to have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The little irresponsive child has never tasted it. *Phillips Brooks,* in *Seeking Life.*

4. *Ye shall not surely die.* There is something in the confidence with which, at times, assertions are made, which has always, more or less, commanded belief in the ignorant and inexperienced. "Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they could not be so confident." *Matthew Henry.*

15. *Thou shalt bruise his heel.* This verse lays down a great ethical prin-

ciple. There is to be a continual struggle between man and the manifold temptations by which he is beset. Evil promptings and suggestions are ever assailing the sons of men; and they must be ever exerting themselves to repel them. It is, of course, true that the great and crowning defeat of man's spiritual adversary was accomplished by Him who was in a special sense the "seed of the woman," the Representative of humanity who overcame once and for all the power of the Evil One. But the terms of the verse are perfectly general; and it must not be interpreted so as to exclude those minor, though in their own sphere not less real, triumphs, by which in all ages individuals have resisted the suggestions of sin and proved themselves superior to the power of evil. It is a prolonged and continuous conflict which the verse contemplates, though one in which the law and aim of humanity is to be to resist, and if possible to slay the serpent which symbolizes the power of temptation. *S. R. Driver,* in *The Book of Genesis.*

In the British Navy there is a scarlet thread running through every line of cordage, and though a rope be cut into inch pieces, it can be recognized as belonging to the government. So is there a scarlet thread running all through the Bible — the whole book points to Christ. In the promise made to Adam appears, as it were, the first twig of a tree. Twig after twig is added, till we can count not only two hundred direct promises of the Messiah, but fifteen hundred, direct and indirect. *A. T. Pierson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *The serpent said to the woman.* Not only one race, but almost all nations have in their traditions preserved some dim remembrance alike of an original happy and holy state — a so-called golden age — in which the intercourse between Heaven and earth was unbroken, and of a subsequent sin and fall of mankind. And all nations have also cherished a faint belief in some future return to this happy state, that is, in some kind of coming redemption, just as in their inmost hearts all men have at least a faint longing for a Redeemer. *Alfred Edersheim.*

The possibility that the Babylonians had an account of the fall similar to that of the Hebrews, is suggested by the cylinder seal in the British Museum with what seems to be the representation of the Temptation engraved on it. We have there represented to us the picture of a tree — a palm, bearing fruit, and on each side of it a seated figure. The one which seems to be intended for the man has the horned hat emblematic of divinity, or probably of divine origin. Behind the woman is shown the serpent with wavy body standing erect on his tail, towering just above her head, as if ready to speak to her. Both figures are stretching out a hand as if to pluck the fruit growing on the tree. The subject and its arrangement are so suggestive that one can hardly regard it as being other than what it seems to be, namely, a Babylonian representation of the

A Representation of the Fall. From an Early Babylonian Cylinder

Temptation, according to records that the Babylonians possessed. The date of this object may be set down as being from about 2750 to 2000 B. C. *Theophilus S. Pinches, The Old Testament in the Light of Historical Records.*

3. That the tree of knowledge was an apple tree, is an idea that we owe to the Latins. The Greeks understood it to be a fig tree. The Rabbis identified it with the vine, or olive tree, or fig tree. *Dillmann.*

15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman.* On the monuments of Egypt there not infrequently occurs the figure of a man in regal costume (probably an incarnate deity), piercing with a spear the head of a large serpent — remarkably suggestive of a tradition of the prophecy that "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." *H. B. Tristram.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Eden, paragraph 18; countries of the Old Testament, paragraphs 8–11.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. There is a strange tree, called the Judas-tree, whose brilliant blossoms attract a great many insects and bees, which are killed by sipping the fatal fluid within. The ground underneath the tree is thickly covered with the victims. Although the flowers are beautiful, and promise good things to the bees, the bees must keep away from them if they would live.

There is a story in the Bible which teaches us that some things which seem good are really like these flowers,— temptations from which we must keep away if we would escape harm from them.

"And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good," is one of the verses of our last lesson, you remember. Adam and Eve, whom God had created, were placed in a beautiful park called the Garden of Eden, and were very happy until they were tempted to disobey God's command.

For Older Pupils. We may honestly take the narrative of the Fall in the Book of Genesis in various ways. We may hold it to be a sober chronicle of the act by which the first man fell from his first estate; or we may take it as a philosophic myth intended to account for a complex moral condition of the human race; or we may regard it as a parable of the mode in which all men fall away from their original innocence. There is much to be said for each of these views — so much that each of them has taken root in good and honest hearts. But, take it how we will, we must take it as charged with a moral and religious intention; the serpent must be something more than a serpent; the narrative must, in some form, convey the story of a moral struggle between the powers of good and evil in the soul of man. Neither reason nor Scripture will suffer us to see less in it than this; while, if we see in it so much as this, it matters comparatively little what else we fail to see in it. *Samuel Cox,* in *The Expositor.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The First Great Law is to Obey

The Lesson of the Fall. The first command God gave to man was one that required simple obedience. "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst

of the garden, ye shall not eat, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." The first sin was what all sin is, wilful disobedience, "She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." "The story of Eden, whatever else it may teach, asserts God's insistence on fidelity to a small trust," says Doctor Marvin R. Vincent. "The conditions imposed on our first parents were not complicated nor burdensome: they were but to let the tree alone. That simple condition they did not meet. Put in trust with the key of knowledge, they betrayed their trust; and is it too much to say that the loyalty which could not bear so small a strain was a feeble sentiment? that this little act of eating a fruit showed the man's unfitness for a dominion founded in loyalty to God quite as decisively as a greater and noisier act would have done?"

Obedience is the Basis of All Virtues. Rudyard Kipling closes his account of the jungle with these words:

Now these are the laws of the jungle, and
Many and mighty are they;
But the head and the hoof of the law, and
The haunch and the hump is — Obey!

The law on which all the laws of the jungle rest, is the law which lies at the basis of all laws for human folk as well. If the law of obedience to God were kept, no other law would ever be broken. It sometimes seems as though there were so many problems in life,— so many things that must be done and so many others that must not be done,— but how everything is simplified when we realize that all laws resolve themselves into the one law of obedience to God, the doing or the bearing of His will.

An Example of Implicit Obedience. One noon General Havelock left his son on London Bridge, telling him to stay there until his return. The father intended to be absent but a short time, but he was kept busy with one affair after another, and forgot all about his boy. Not till he went home at night, and his wife inquired, "Where is Henry?" did he recall his order. Hastily calling a cab, he drove down to the bridge in great anxiety, and found there his boy standing where he had left him.

We must Obey. God's will is powerful and resistless. "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder," says Christ in speaking of the "stone which the builders rejected, the same which became the head of the corner," Christ Himself. There is an alga, the most beautiful, delicately formed plant imaginable, with stem the frailest possible, which grows in the midst of the rushing waters of the Pacific coast, where the breakers roar and the waves dash with such force against the rocks that a man's arm would be broken in pieces did he try to resist them. The beautiful plant owes its life to its yielding to, and swaying with, the mighty waters that dash upon it. This is what Christ means about our lives: that if we try to resist God's will, we shall miserably be crushed, while if we yield and obey, a beautiful life will result.

Hesitating Obedience. And how much do even Christians lose, through their partial or their slow obedience! How we hesitate and question, when our duty is simply to obey! How we cling to our own ways, modes, and wills, when the Christ is commanding us forward to some high service! How strangely we forget that in the grammar of life the "Thou willest" should be the first person, and the "I will" a far-off second! When the soldier hears the voice of command he becomes deaf to all other voices, even the voice

of danger, or the voice of death itself; and when Christ speaks to us His word should completely fill the soul, leaving no room for hesitancy, no place for doubt. *Henry M. Burton,* in *Expositor's Bible.*

II Why We Are Temptable

Why God did not make Men Good. How common is the question: If there be a God, why did He not create men so that they would be good and happy? The question, of course, answers itself. If God made men good they would not be good. An automaton is not good. If God created character it would not be character. Goodness and joy are moral terms. And morality can not be manufactured; it must be achieved. *Sunday School Times.*

The Nature of Character. The word *character* originally represented an instrument for cutting or engraving, and then the figure or letter or symbol engraved. In olden times writing was "carassed," cut, into the substance written on by means of a piece of bone or ivory or an iron pen. We now use the word *character* to represent certain lasting results scored into the soul by experiences and habits of life, by the temptations overcome and the temptations resisted. Character is the result of reiterated choice between good and evil.

The Effect of Temptations on Character. Why do men stand upright? It is because the earth pulls them down. If a man yields to its attractions he soon finds himself prone on the ground. In this attitude he is helpless. He can do nothing there, so he reacts against the force of gravitation. He stands on his feet, and the more powerful the force may be, the more necessary it is that the active man should resist it. When the need for activity ceases, man no longer stands erect. He yields to the force he has resisted. When he is asleep the force of gravitation has its own way so far as his posture is concerned. But activity and life demand reaction, and it is only through resistance that man can conquer adversity.

In like manner, temptation has its part to play in the development of character. The strength of life is increased by the conquest of temptation. We may call no man virtuous till he has won such a victory. It is not the absence of temptation, but the reaction from it, that insures the persistence of virtue. If sin entice thee, consent thou not, and after a while its allurements will cease to attract. *David Starr Jordan.*

Character versus Innocence. In that beautiful story of the lost paradise, God pulls down the hedge built around Adam and Eve. The government through a fence outside was succeeded by self-government inside. The hermit and the cloistered saint end their careers in innocence. But the struggler unto blood against sin, ends his career with character.

We admire the child's innocence, but it lacks experience and maturity; it is only a handful of germs. But every heart kindles and glows when the true hero stands forth in the person of some Paul or Savonarola, some Luther or Lincoln, having passed through fire, through flood, through all the thunder of life's battles, ever ripening, sweetening, and enlarging, his fineness and gentleness being the result of great strength and great wisdom, accumulated through long life, until he stands, at the end of his career, as the sun stands on a summer afternoon just before it goes down. *N. D. Hillis.*

III Playing With Temptation

Why did Eve eat of the Forbidden Fruit? Why do men fall so fearfully? The explanation is not that God tries, nor even that Satan tempts, but that men themselves purposely linger in the neighborhood of temptation, wilfully dally and tamper with it. The warning against this begins with the very dawn of our race. Why did Eve eat the forbidden fruit? Because she lingered near the forbidden tree, and gazed on it, and listened to the seductive whisper, till the look became the thought, and the thought the desire, and the desire the purpose, and the purpose the deadly act. Would Achan have become a thief of the accursed thing if he had not gloated over the ingot of gold and the Babylonish garment?

"Impulses easy to subdue," says Rousseau, "drag us along without resistance. We yield to slight temptations, of which we despise the danger. Insensibly we find ourselves in perilous positions, from which we can no longer deliver ourselves without heroic efforts which terrify us; and at last we fall into the abyss, saying to God, "Why hast thou made me so feeble?" But, in spite of ourselves, He answers to our consciences, "I made thee too weak to rise (by thine own power) out of the gulf, because I made thee strong enough never to fall therein."

There is but one rule about temptation; namely,

Think it as a serpent's egg,
Which, hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill it in the shell. *F. W. Farrar.*

Curiosity an Element in Temptation. Mr. Moody said that in the guest room where he stayed one night a card hung on the wall with the inscription, "Don't turn me round until morning." He obeyed and went to bed, but finally got up again, and lighted the gas, and turned that card around to see what was on the other side! It was curiosity, in part, which made Eve linger over the forbidden fruit, wondering how it tasted, and what would be the result of eating it. There is a deadly poison whose odor has a peculiar charm. Men who handle it, although they well know that one taste produces almost instant death, are obliged to fight against their desire to taste and know for themselves what it is. One owner of a laboratory where it is manufactured admits that he has often been forced to leave the place, so strong is the fascination of the drug.

Enter not into Temptation. A reckless man in a Zoological Garden once seized a venomous serpent by the nape of the neck, and held it up before his companions. The man thought he had the serpent wholly in his power. But it began to coil its long body about his arm, and then slowly to tighten its grasp till the man in agony was obliged to drop his hold of its neck. Quickly then it turned and bit him, and soon the man was dead. He thought he was strong enough to play with the serpent and then thrust it from him when wearied of the play. Many think they are strong enough to play with temptation of any sort, but they find sooner or later, that the temptation has mastered them. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," said Christ. It is the entering into temptation which is to be guarded against. You are probably familiar with the story of the gentleman who asked each of three applicants for the position of coachman how near he could drive to the edge of a precipice without danger of going over. "Half a yard,"

said one; "a foot," said another; "I would keep as far away from it as possible," said the third, who secured the position. That is the way a temptation must be treated, kept as far from as possible. To go near temptation is the first step toward yielding to it. "Avoid it, turn from it, and pass on."

God will with the Temptation also make a Way to escape. When only have we a right to rely on this promise? In Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* Interpreter leads a guest into a room where a man is constantly throwing water on a fire on the hearth, and yet the fire only burns brighter and brighter. Then Interpreter leads the guest outside and shows him a man with an oil can, who is constantly pouring oil through a secret channel which leads directly to the fire. As long as we keep the temptation lurid we have no right to ask God to overcome its power. We must do our best to escape from it, as well as ask God to make a way of escape.

A physician may visit a small-pox patient and escape the disease himself, but one who has not been vaccinated has no right to go to the bedside and expect to be kept from the consequences of exposing himself.

A man to whom drink is a temptation has no right to go to a saloon, yet such a man, as in a recent story, may go to a saloon in quest of ice for a sick friend, when ice can not be obtained elsewhere, and pray God for help to withstand his temptation and receive that help. "Only those temptations which we encounter in the way of duty, in the path of consecration," says Phillips Brooks, "only those has our Lord promised us that we shall conquer. If you are in temptation for temptation's sake, with no purpose behind it, you are lost."

SENTENCE SERMONS

The tests of life are to make, not to break us. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

The kingliest attitude of man is the acceptance of mystery with unconditioned obedience. *Cortland Myers.*

To parley with temptation is to play with fire. *Bunyan.*

Obedience is the price of spiritual knowledge. *Joseph Dunn Burrell.*

An act of sin is only a train long laid, fired by a spark at last. *F. W. Robertson.*

Temptation is the one certainty,—the one immediate certainty, before us all. *George Adam Smith.*

The virtue of paganism was strength; the virtue of Christianity is obedience. *Hare.*

The doctrine of environment had its death-blow in the Garden of Eden. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

They who would pluck flowers from the very edge of the precipice must be prepared to fall. *Farrar.*

Our evil genius, like the junior member of a deliberative body, always gives its views first. *Young Folks.*

Resistance of the devil would be short-lived and ineffectual if we could not accompany it with approach to God. *Sunday School Times.*

In the promise made to the woman one faint note had already been struck of the music that was to grow through the ages till the angels took it up over a cradle at Bethlehem. *A. S. Aglen.*

It is to the stoop of the soul that sin comes: let it be upright, keep fast by its integrity, and there is never danger, never harm. *John F. W. Ware.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Rev. 2.7.

The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. 16.20.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3.23.

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. 1 Cor. 15.3.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Rom. 5.19.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Jas. 4.7.

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Prov. 1.10.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6.23.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Jas. 1.12.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 2.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The whole race has sinned, but its sin has been atoned for; Christ is the propitiation for the sin of the world. There is a power of evil in the life of the race — a great and awful power, which, if unrestricted, will destroy us; but the grace of God in Christ is infinitely mightier to redeem and to save. We are born to that redemption, to that salvation; it lies with each one of us to determine whether we will receive it or reject it. If we are finally lost, it will not be because we belong to a sinful race, but because we have rejected the infinite mercy of God which has achieved the redemption of the race in Christ. *R. W. Dale,* in *The Expositor.*

THE LESSON STORY

To Eve in the Garden of Eden came the wily serpent, and, to awaken doubt and distrust in her mind, said to her, "Is it possible that God has forbidden you to eat the fruit of every tree in the garden?" "He has not denied us all fruits," returned Eve, "only the fruit of a single tree; of the fruit of the tree of knowledge we must not eat, on penalty of death." "Assuredly you shall not die," returned the serpent, "it is only because your God is afraid that you may know good and evil, know what He knows, that He is keeping this fruit from you." Eve listened to the serpent and looked at the fruit. The fruit looked good to eat, she wished to be wise, the serpent must be right, God was a jealous God. Then she ate the forbidden fruit and gave it to Adam, and he ate also. As the serpent told them, they became wise, but their wisdom only brought to them consciousness of sin. They made coverings for themselves out of fig leaves, and hid themselves among the trees when they became aware of God's presence, for they knew the guilt of their disobedience. To God's call, Adam answered that he had hid himself because he was afraid. Had they eaten of the forbidden fruit? Adam said he had eaten because Eve had

tempted him, and Eve said she had eaten because the serpent had tempted her. Then God pronounced the penalty for disobedience. The serpent should henceforth creep along the ground, the woman should have pain and sorrow, the man should toil till death released him from his labors. "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." God did not leave them wholly comfortless. There would be continual strife between their descendants and the descendants of the serpent, He told them, and at last there would come One who would be victorious.

In this story the power of evil is represented by the serpent. Man sins by wilful disobedience of God's command. The temptation is a test which he fails to stand. Penalty must follow guilt. Man will be engaged in continual warfare against evil, but at last he will win the conflict. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet."

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. It is better to grow strong through conquered temptation than to lose power through lack of exercise. *Sunday School Times.*

2. There are two sayings of St. Paul which throw much light on this subject: the one is, "First that which is natural; afterwards that which is spiritual"—the other is, "Where there is no law, sin is not imputed." First that which is natural: creation furnishes a nature capable of moral perfection, but moral perfection is not of nature but of will. Where there is no will, there is no morality. Man does not become a moral being, does not become man, until in the presence of evil he can choose the good. He can not know good until he knows evil. The child strays into a garden and eats dangerous fruits and destroys costly plants, but does nothing worthy of punishment because no commandment has been given him. He is neither evil nor good, but innocent. It is when the law comes, when this and that is marked as evil, that man's trial commences and that he becomes a moral being. *Marcus Dods.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What motive did John ascribe to Cain's crime? (1 John 3.12.) 2. In contrast to Cain's words of verses 13 and 14, read David's prayer for remission of sins in the 51st Psalm. 3. Tell how the story of the Good Samaritan answers Cain's question. (Luke 10.25–37.) 4. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16.19–31), what was the sin for which the rich man was condemned? 5. Does the man who puts a gold piece into the collection box by mistake instead of a penny, deserve any more credit than the one who puts in the penny? What determines the real value of a gift?

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

God sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, where was the tree of life, and placed an angel there armed with a flaming sword to prevent their return. Outside Paradise Adam cultivated the earth by hard labor and toil. To Eve a son was born, whom she called Cain, a word which means "a possession," and then another son whom she called Abel, which means "a breath, or a vapor"; Cain became a farmer, and Abel a shepherd.

THE STORY OF CAIN AND ABEL

Gen. 4.3–15 (Study the chapter.) Commit vv. 8–10.

Golden Text

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. 1 John 3.15.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 4.3–15

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.
4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:
5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.
6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?
7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door: and unto thee *shall* be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.
8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.
9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?
10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.
11 And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.
12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.
13 And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear.
14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me.
15 And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

3. *In the process of time. At the end of days,* margin. After a time, *i. e.* after they became a keeper of sheep and a tiller of the ground, verse 2.

4. *The fat thereof.* The fat pieces were highly prized and were offered in sacrifice. (Num. 18.17.) *The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.* How God signified His approval, or why He approved Abel's offering and not Cain's, the narrative does not say. From the mention of Cain's anger in verse 6 we know that the trouble was in Cain, rather than in his offering.

5. *His countenance fell.* Compare our word chapfallen.

7. *If thou doest well, i. e.* if thou offerest thy gift with a right and sincere purpose. *Shalt thou not be accepted?* R. V., *Shall it not be lifted up?, i. e.*

thy countenance. *Sin lieth at the door.* R. V., *sin coucheth at the door.* Sin is pictured as a wild beast couching at the door, ready to spring upon the one who gives it entrance. *Unto thee shall be his desire.* Either, he is eager to spring upon thee, or, as in the margin, he shall be subject unto thee. *And thou shalt rule over him.* R. V., *But do thou rule over it.* Thou shouldest conquer the temptation to sin.

8. *Talked.* R. V., *told.* Probably something is omitted here.

10. *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me.* Murder is a crime which calls for vengeance.

11. *Now art thou cursed from the earth.* R. V., *ground.* The words may mean either "the curse shall come upon thee from the earth, which shall not yield thee her fruit," or "Cursed art thou away from the land," *i. e.* Thou art cursed and banished from the land, in which thou hast dwelt. *Browne.*

12. The particulars of the curse. *Strength.* Produce.

13. *My punishment is greater than I can bear.* He is not penitent because of his guilt, he is alarmed at the severity of his punishment.

14. *From thy face shall I be hid.* Cain is pictured as in Eden; and he seems to think Jehovah's presence is confined to that region. In a similar manner Jonah assumes that Canaan was the limit of Jehovah's jurisdiction (1.3) and David that he will have to serve other gods outside of Jehovah's land. (1 Sam. 26.19) Another interpretation is given by Lange: "It is clearly growing despair that will no more seek the presence of Jehovah through prayer and sacrifice, under the pretence that it is no more allowed to do so." *Every one that findeth me shall slay me.* Blood revenge is here taken for granted.

15. *Vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold.* Cain's kinsman would atone for his death by slaying seven of the murderer's family. This refers to the ancient custom of blood revenge. *The Lord set a mark upon Cain.* R. V., *Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *Cain brought an offering.* From the time of Abel onwards, sacrifices are uniformly, and with increasing clearness, set before us as the appointed way of approaching and holding fellowship with God, till at the close of Scripture history we have the sacrifice of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to which all sacrifices pointed. And not only so, but as the dim remembrance of a better state from which man had fallen, and of a hope of deliverance, had been preserved among all heathen nations, so also had that of the necessity of sacrifices. Even the bloody rites of savages, nay, the cruel sacrifices of best-beloved children, what were they but the cry of despair in the felt need of reconciliation to God through sacrifice — the giving up of that most dear in room and stead of the offerer? These are the terribly broken pillars of what once had been a temple; the terribly distorted traditions of truths once divinely revealed. *Alfred Edersheim,* in *The World Before the Flood.*

8. *Cain rose up against his brother.* We never know where we may be led by jealousy and malice. One of the striking features of this incident is the rapidity with which small sins generate great ones. When Cain went in the joy of harvest and offered his first fruits no thought could be further from his mind than murder. It may have come as suddenly on himself as on the unsuspecting Abel, but the germ was in him. Great sins are not so sudden

as they seem. Familiarity with evil thought ripens us for evil action; and a moment of passion, an hour's loss of self-control, a tempting occasion, may hurry us into irremediable evil. And even though this does not happen, envious, uncharitable, and malicious thoughts make our offerings as distasteful as Cain's. He that loveth not his brother knoweth not God. *Marcus Dods.*

9. *Where is Abel thy brother?* As Cain walked away from the field where he had killed Abel, leaving the dead brother lying on the ground, the passion which had blinded and carried him away began to subside; his inner being became quieter; and then from its hidden depths there sounded a mysterious voice asking, "Where is Abel thy brother?" A real voice and real words — so real that they doubtless startled him, as similar words have startled many another. Indeed, so real may they have been that they perhaps made him look round to see if some one were at his side or just behind him. He replied, also, perhaps, aloud: "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" It is barely probable, at all events we need not assume, that he at once distinctly recognized the divine Presence; but scarcely, with passion again arising, had he blurted out the lie, then probably the truth dawned on him, and he knew he was face to face with God. What afterwards followed makes doubt impossible. And is it not often so with ourselves? In the very act of attempting to deny or throw off the responsibility of a sin with which we are being directly or indirectly charged, whether by men or by an inner voice, we become aware that it is with God, God Himself, and not merely with an abstract law or duty, not merely with a human authority, not merely with our own conscience or better self, that we have to do. And the experiences that follow make us certain that such was the fact. *D. W. Simon.*

15. *A Mark.* "The brand of Cain" has become a proverb, but there is nothing to suggest a mark upon his person, and the nature of the sign we are not told. All we see is the guilty man going from the presence of the Lord, where he might yet have repented, wandering into the land of wandering (Nod) in front of Eden, an expression which suggests nothing but an endless exile from happiness. *A. S. Aglen.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *In process of time.* The margin reads, "At the end of days;" and this is truly Oriental. "When the days are ended, I will fulfill my promise." "After these days are ended, I shall have peace." "When the days come round (in their circle) I will do that for you." *Roberts.*

4. *His countenance fell.* Cain hung down his head and looked upon the earth. This is the posture of one darkly brooding (Jer. 3.12; Job 29.24), and prevails to this day in the East as a sign of evil plottings. *Burkhardt.*

7. *Sin lieth at the door.* A man accused of having murdered a child would be accosted in the following language: "If you have done this, think not to escape; no! for sin will ever lie at your door: it will descend from generation to generation." To the man accused of having committed any other dreadful crime, it would be said, "Ah! if I had done it, do I not know sin would ever lie at my door?" The idea is sin personified in the shape of some fierce animal crouched at the door. *Roberts.*

10. *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me.* Abel's blood, we see, called for vengeance, for evil things for Cain, called God to make inquisition

for blood, and so pleaded as to secure the banishment of the murderer. The Arabs have a belief that over the grave of a murdered man his spirit hovers in the form of a bird that cries, "Give me drink, give me drink," and only ceases when the blood of the murderer is shed. Cain's conscience told him the same thing; there was no criminal law threatening death to the murderer, but he felt that men would kill him if they could. He heard the blood of Abel crying from the ground. *Marcus Dods, Expositor's Bible.*

14. *Every one that findeth me shall slay me.* When a man has slain another, it is, as the Oriental sees it, the imperative duty of the relations of the murdered man to pursue the murderer unrelentlessly until his blood, or its agreed price, be given as an equivalent of the life that he has taken. This has been the law of the Egyptians from the very earliest ages. "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," is the recorded command of God to Noah and his sons, on their beginning life anew after the Deluge (Gen. 9.6); and from that day to this, throughout all the East, man has recognized it as his duty to avenge the blood of a murdered relative, as he would be true to his God. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Eden, paragraph 18; valley of the Euphrates, paragraphs 12–17.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever see a boy in a "fit of sulks"? Such a boy thinks he has been ill-treated, and he shows it in a sullen, unlovely manner. Sour, cross, ill-natured, petulant, gloomy, sullen, morose, are some other words that apply to him. Every one turns away from a sullen boy, for his downcast, threatening face is not pleasant to look upon, but every one looks with pleasure at the frank, open countenance of the boy who never sulks.

Of the two sons of Adam and Eve, one seems to have been sullen and the other bright and cheerful. What were their names? Which one was the sullen son? Which verse tells us this? From the fourth verse, what do we know must have been the character of Abel?

For Older Pupils. This chapter has always been a troublesome one to students of the Bible. Where did Cain get his wife, were there agriculturists and shepherds in Eden, were sacrifices offered to Jehovah in this primitive time, was the institution of blood revenge then in existence, if Adam were the only other man living whom did Cain fear, is the Cain who builds a city, in verses 17–22, the same Cain who is a fugitive in the earlier part of the chapter? Various explanations have been offered to all these questions. A satisfactory explanation is that the story of Cain and Abel originally formed part of a different context, belonged to a later period in the history of the children of Israel, perhaps when they are settled as agriculturists and shepherds in Palestine.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Not the Gift but the Giver

Why Abel's Gift was Acceptable. The acceptance of the offering depends on the acceptance of the offerer. God had respect to Abel and his offering—

the man first, and then the offering. God looks through the offering to the state of soul from which it proceeds; or even, as the words would indicate, sees the soul first and judges and treats the offering according to the inward disposition. God does not judge of what you are by what you say to Him and what you do for Him, but He judges of what you say to Him and do for Him by what you are. "By faith," says a New Testament writer, "Abel offered a more acceptable offering than Cain." He had the faith which enabled him to believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. His attitude toward God was sound; his life was a diligent seeking to please God; and from all such persons God gladly receives acknowledgment. When the offering is the true expression of the soul's gratitude, love, devotedness, then it is acceptable. When it is merely an external offering, that rather veils than expresses the real feeling; when it is not vivified and rendered significant by any spiritual act on the part of the worshiper, it is plainly of no effect. *Marcus Dods, Expositor's Bible.*

What is the Real Motive of Giving? "The true motives of our actions, like the real pipes of an organ, are usually concealed; but the gilded and hollow pretext is purposely placed in front for show," says an old writer. One may give money to a charity, not for the good that the money may do, but because one wishes to gain favor with the promoters of the charity. The Jews have a saying that "He who eats food that has not been tithed is worthy of death," but we know they were actuated not by a liberal spirit, but by a desire to secure the reputation of liberality. "How much is there in it for me?" is a common street phrase. One will do this or that, if there is to be any personal return. What is such a gift of time or money worth to the giver? God judges our acts by our motives.

The Little Reconcentrado's Gift. During the war with Spain, when the American army was supplying the starving reconcentrados of El Caney with food, a storm made the roads impassable, and the order was given that the people might walk to the camp, six miles off, for their rations. When Lieutenant Brooke was returning to camp one day he saw a six year old lad lying in the mud by the road utterly exhausted. The Lieutenant leaped from his horse, picked the little fellow up, and carried him to camp. There he saw that he was well fed and cared for until his strength returned. When the boy was able to travel he was given a supply of food to take back with him to El Caney. Two days later the little fellow, still pale and weak, appeared at the camp. He had walked back over six long miles to bring his only possession, a small chicken, to Lieutenant Brooke, because he had been so kind to him. The Lieutenant took the chicken to General Shafter and told the story of the lad's gratitude. When the army entered Santiago the chicken entered, too, and perched each night on a gilded chandelier in the governor's palace. She traveled wherever General Shafter's baggage did, and was finally brought to the United States and taken to his home in San Francisco.

II Whosoever hateth his Brother is a Murderer

Christ's Words about Hatred and Murder. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and

whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell fire." No offense was brought under the cognizance of the Jewish law at all which was not a sin in act; the sin of actual murder, for instance. But our Lord raises the whole standard of guilt. He takes no account of sins of act at all. In the citizens of His new Kingdom, sins of act, are, as it were, out of the question. The way He deals with the law — specifically the law of murder, but in principle all the laws — is, if we may paraphrase His words, thus: Under the new law you are to think of malicious anger, of anger and malice entertained in your hearts, as under the old law men were accustomed to think of ordinary homicide. When this malice of heart expresses itself in the word of dislike and contempt, that is a graver offence, and shall have attached to it the same moral guilt as would in the old days have brought a man before the central court. The stronger expression of reprobation, 'Thou fool,' is a sin which may bring a man into eternal punishment. 'He is liable (literally) up to the point of the Gehenna of fire.'"

Our Lord certainly speaks in metaphor. Because obviously one could not in fact bring a man under any earthly tribunal for the thoughts of his heart. But the meaning is plain. Our Lord raises deliberately allowed sins of thought and feeling to the level previously occupied by overt acts; and words He counts yet graver sins; and the deliberate expression of hatred He counts a sin which may destroy the soul. *Charles Gore, The Sermon on the Mount.*

Real Self-Control. To most people self-control means the control of appearances and not the control of realities. This is a radical mistake, and must be corrected, if we are to get a clear idea of self-control, and if we are to make a fair start in acquiring it as a permanent habit.

If a man is ugly to me, and I want to knock him down, and refrain from doing so simply because it would not appear well, and is not the habit of the people about me, my desire to knock him down is still a part of myself, and I have not controlled myself until I am absolutely free from that interior desire. So long as I am in hatred to another I am in bondage to my hatred; and if, for the sake of appearances, I do not act or speak from it, I am none the less at its mercy, and it will find an outlet wherever it can do so without debasing me in the eyes of other men more willing than I am to be debased. My selfish desire to injure the man I hate is counterbalanced by my selfish desire to stand well in the eyes of other men. There can be no true self-control so long as either form of selfishness dominates my actions. *Leslie's Magazine.*

Too Late. Not long ago a young man of twenty was arraigned in one of the Boston district courts for assault with intent to kill. The preliminary history of the boy is interesting, because it indicates a dangerous road down which any hot-blooded youth is liable to make a swift descent.

Charles, as we will call him, belonged to a respectable family, but from very early years he showed a fiery temper, and his parents were too busy or too thoughtless to correct and restrain it. The habit of giving way to anger grew upon him, and he became quite uncontrollable. At times no one dared to oppose him, and the youth, who was generally pleasant and good-natured, became the periodic tyrant of the household. At one time he beat his little brother into insensibility, and might have killed him, had he not been forcibly restrained. The apology for him at home was, "It's Charles's infirmity. He can't help it."

Early one morning Charles went to his uncle and demanded two bank-books

that he knew were in his uncle's possession. Receiving a refusal he flew into one of his fits of rage. Beside himself, and probably not clearly knowing what he did, he seized a cane and struck his uncle several blows, till the old man sank to the floor. In an instant, terrified at his own violence, the youth came to his senses; but it was too late.

"Anger is a sort of madness," but it is also swift mischief; and a mad moment may ruin a lifetime. Unless early checked, a fiery temper becomes one's master. Its best antidote is the study of the Great Example — a timely cultivation of self-control under divine aid. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." *Youth's Companion.*

III Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Who is My Brother? Jacob Riis emphatically asserts that "We are our brother's keeper, whether we will or no," and we are beginning to realize this, though too many of us limit the meaning of the word brother.

"Why am I your brother?" questions Lyman Abbott. "Why is this man with a hundred millions, brother to this truckman whom he employs? Why is this college professor with his learning, brother to this poor ignorant man who can neither read nor write? Why are you in your comfortable home, brother or sister to the homeless? You are not fellow-citizen with a man who does not belong to the same family. You are not fellow Anglo-Saxon with a man who does not belong to the same race. You are not human brother to the man who is not of the same parentage. And you are not one of a brotherhood if there be no Father who binds us together."

Our Responsibility for Our Brother. "Surely we can not take care of everybody," said a man to Bishop Simpson.

"No, but this much must be true: If we neglect to put out a hand for the protection or assistance of one whom we see to be in danger or in need, we are responsible for the harm or the suffering that comes to him in consequence."

Bishop Phillips Brooks says: "In one department of life we have learned this lesson quite well. The captain of any ship that has passed by the boat filled with shipwrecked sailors that he met on the high seas would not be able to face the scorn and contempt of all whom he met on his return to port. They would call him a coward, and hold him responsible for the lives of those men in case they went to the bottom. We recognize that at sea every man is responsible for the life of every other man whom he meets in distress. And this is right. And if this holds true in things that are wholly temporal, how much more true is it in things that pertain to the eternal life of our fellow creatures!"

"We are not morally responsible simply for the wickedness which we do, but for the wickedness which we can prevent as well," says Doctor Beecher. "If you put the torch to your neighbor's house, you are guilty in one way; but if another puts the torch to that house, and you go by, and see the flames, and say: 'It is not my business; I did not kindle that fire; and, besides, he is an enemy of mine,' you are as culpable as if you had set fire to the house yourself."

One who was His Brother's Keeper. Lady Frere once went to the rail-

road station to meet her husband. With her was a servant who had never seen Lord Frere, but she directed him to go and look for her husband. "But how shall I know him?" questioned the servant. "Oh," she answered, "look for a tall gentleman helping somebody." The servant departed, and soon identified Lord Frere, who was helping an old lady from the train.

The Spirit of Cain still lives. When God has spoken to that money interest in England which has killed China with its traffic in opium saying, "Where is thy brother," the insolent answer has been clearly heard more than once, "Am I my brother's keeper?" And to the close-handed, hard-hearted employer of men God says: "Where is thy brother who wears out his body for you every day; what is his home life; what is his social life; what are his recreations?" Too often the same answer comes: "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" It is this attitude, the repudiation of responsibility, which is the menace of our modern life. *J. Douglas Adam.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Love is life, but hatred is death. *Longfellow.*

God does not measure what we bring to Him; He weighs it. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

As pain is a mark of weakness, so also is anger. *Marcus Aurelius.*

The evil deed's avenging curse it is,
That evil evermore it shall beget. *Schiller.*

It is not so much the prayer but the pray-er that moves the heart of God. *W. H. Territt.*

Sin grows rapidly, and after a small beginning takes wide steps. *Wisdom of Sirach.*

God marks all evil-doers with a brand in the conscience. *Tübinger Bible.*

I am a prince, with princely spirit,
A ruler if I rule my heart. *Russian Saying.*

Where should we Christians be to-day if the Lord had said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" *Cardinal Gibbons.*

A guilty conscience is a terrible whip and torment to the sinner, perpetually lashing him with solicitous thoughts and fears, that he knows not when to be secure; nor dare he trust to any promises of protection, but distrusts all, doubts, and is jealous of all. *Seneca.*

Put a girdle around your body and then measure the girdle and see if you are fifty or sixty inches round; and is that the circle of your sympathies — the size of yourself: or, to measure around the heart, would it take a girdle large enough to encircle the land and encircle the world? *Talmage.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Mark 7.6.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. Prov. 15.8.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. Thou shalt not have vengeance,

nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Jehovah. Lev. 19.17. R. V.

Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. 1 Sam. 16.7.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. Heb. 11.4.

We should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John 3.12.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. Prov. 16.32.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The drama is a typical one: it stands ominously at the beginning of human history as the first consequence of the fall; and it has often been reënacted since. The sullen temper, the unchecked passion, the mean and heartless excuse, have again and again wrought out their fatal effects; they have spread misery and suffering around them, even if they have not actually ended in the terrible sin of Cain. We have the warning. Let no flow of temper, no insincerity of purpose, vitiate our sacrifice and render it unacceptable to God. Let the envious, discontented temper be overcome and banished; it is like a beast of prey crouching at our door, whose deadly assault nothing but prompt and instant exertion can repel. *S. R. Driver.*

THE LESSON STORY

Cain, the farmer, brought the product of the ground, and Abel, the shepherd, the firstlings of his flock as offerings to God. Abel's offering was pleasing to God, but Cain's was not. The fault was in Cain himself, not in his offering. Cain was very angry, and downcast, and God questioned him as to his sullen looks, telling him that if his purpose were right and good, his countenance would be lifted up, not downcast, and if his purpose were evil, then sin, like a beast of prey, was waiting at his door, seeking to gain entrance. Sin wished to spring upon him, but he ought to conquer sin. Cain gave no heed to the warning. His angry, jealous thoughts grew until he led the unsuspecting Abel out into the field and killed him.

"Where is Abel thy brother?" questioned the Lord. Insolently Cain answered, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" "What hast thou done? Thy brother's blood cries out for vengeance;" and God pronounced a curse upon Cain for his crime. The ground he tilled would not yield to him its products and he should be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.

Not humble and repentant, but affrighted and complaining, Cain cried out that his punishment was greater than he could bear; he was driven out from the land where Jehovah dwelt, his life was in danger from every one he met. But God in His Mercy promised Cain that if any one should slay him, seven of the murderer's family should be slain in return, and He appointed a sign for Cain. Cain went forth into the Land of Wandering, east of Eden, and there he built a city and called it Enoch, giving it the name of his son.

This story of Cain and Abel is briefly told — the picture is drawn by a very few strokes — and yet it portrays a series of thoughts. The sincerity with which an offering is made, not the value of the offering itself, makes it acceptable to God; the nature of sin,— crafty, cruel, lying in wait to gain entrance into the heart; angry, jealous feelings, if unsubdued, lead the possessor to grave sin; the steps by which one is gradually led to commit a crime; God does not leave the tempted without warning; punishment must follow guilt; one may be made bitter, instead of repentant, by God's dealings; conscience makes cowards; God is merciful as well as just to the sinner; the responsibility of each one for his brother.

SUBJECT FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

The duty to care for the welfare of others is limited, first, by the duties which grow out of one's own life; second, by the duty of guarding against the destruction of another's independence; third, by our special duties toward special neighbors. *Friedrich Paulsen.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What was the cause of the flood? (Gen. 6.5–7, 11, 12.) 2. Why was Noah saved? (Gen. 6.8, 9.) 3. What directions were given for the building of the ark and filling it? (Gen. 6.14–21.) 4. What were the dimensions of the ark in feet, taking the cubit as twenty-one inches? 5. What is meant by "God remembered Noah"? (See Gen. 19.29; Neh. 13.14, 22; Psa. 106.4; 132.1; 136.23.) 6. What other instances are recorded in the Bible of God's accomplishing His purpose by means of a wind? (Ex. 14.21; Num. 11.31; Ezek. 37.9; Jonah 1.4.) 7. What did ravens do for Elijah? (1 Kings 17.3–6.) 8. What mention of a dove in connection with Christ's life? (Matt. 3.16.) 9. What was Noah's first act on leaving the ark? (Gen. 8.20.) 10. What promise was made by God? (Gen. 8.21, 22.) 11. What use did Christ make of this story of the flood, in Matt. 24.36–39? What parable did He give to teach the same warning? (The parable of the Ten Virgins.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

A list of the descendants of Cain is given down to the boastful Lamech with whom polygamy began. The three sons of Lamech mark an epoch in the progress of civilization; Jabal is the first nomadic sheik; Jubal is the first musician; and Tubal-cain is the first artificer in brass and iron. A list of the descendants of Seth, the third son of Adam, follows. Until the birth of Noah, "a just man and perfect," only Enoch is worthy of special mention, for "Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." Then comes the universal corruption among men, and after many years, when all hope of reformation perishes, God sends the flood.

LESSON V — FEBRUARY 3

NOAH SAVED IN THE ARK

Gen. 8.1–16. (Read Gen. 6–9.) Commit vv. 1–3.

Golden Text

The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord. Psa. 37.39.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 8.1–16

1 And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.

2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month,* on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark; for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening, and, lo, in her mouth *was* an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again to him any more.

13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month,* the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *God remembered Noah.* Manifested His interest in his welfare. *Made a wind to pass over the earth.* Producing sudden evaporation.

2. *The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped.* See 7.11, 12.

7. *The raven went forth to and fro.* This may mean that the raven re-

turned to the ark from time to time, to rest but not to eat, for it subsisted on the floating carrion, or that it returned not at all to the ark, but rested as well as feasted on the carcasses which it found here and there.

9. *The dove found no rest for the sole of her foot.* Unlike the raven, the dove rests only on dry places and feeds only on grain.

11. *An olive leaf.* An emblem of the restoration of peace between God and the earth, and from this circumstance the olive has been the emblem of peace among all civilized nations. *Clarke. Noah knew that the waters were abated.* The olive tree has this in common with the laurel, that it grows even under the water, hence an olive leaf is the first sign of life from the earth which is rising again from her watery grave. *Delitzsch.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *The Ark.* It should be borne in mind that the ark was designed not for navigation, but chiefly for storage. It had neither masts, rudder, nor sails, and was probably flat at the bottom, resembling a huge floating chest. To show how suitable its proportions were for storage, we may mention that a Dutchman, Peter Jansen, built in 1604 a ship on precisely the same proportions, which was found to hold one-third more lading than any other vessel of the same tonnage. *Alfred Edersheim.*

One of the most curious and interesting undertakings in years is that of the building in Denmark of a vessel modeled upon the lines of Noah's ark, as described in Genesis. When launched, the ship, to the surprise of the builder, proved itself very seaworthy. The *London Spectator,* in commenting upon this curious undertaking, says that the experiment is regarded by the Danes as strengthening belief in the accuracy of the biblical story of Noah's escape. *The Youth's Companion.*

1. *Every living thing.* There is not a word of sympathy for the drowned. It is pitiless as Nature itself. It is the stern religion of the Old Testament that speaks: the spirit that could put aside compassion when it felt itself the minister of the divine Wrath, the spirit which was so different from His who wept over the Jerusalem whose doom He was fated to pronounce. *A. S. Aglen.*

2. *The rain from heaven was restrained.* It is a singular confirmation of the Deluge as a great historical fact that it is found engraven in the memories of all the great nations of antiquity; but it is still more striking to find it holding a place in the traditions of the most widely spread races of America, and, indeed, of the world at large. *Cunningham Geikie.*

Of all the traditions handed down to us through the cuneiform inscriptions, the most extensive and complete discovered thus far is the Babylonian account of the deluge. A record of this event is found in the works of Josephus and Eusebius, but in all of its details of vigor, the Babylonian account stands pre-eminently next to the biblical record. The tablet contains one hundred and eighty-five lines, some of which are irrecoverably broken.

Some of the translation is as follows:

> The waters of the abyss sank back, the great storm, the deluge, came to an end.
> I looked out over the sea, crying aloud,
> But all mankind had turned to earth (again).

Coin of Apamea, Phrygia, Representing the Deluge

In place of habitations, everything had become a marsh.
I opened an air-hole, and light fell upon my face.
I sank back, and sat down, I wept.
My tears flowed down my cheeks.
I looked up: "The world a wide ocean!"
On the twelfth (day?) there appeared a bit of land.
I sent out a dove; she left, she flew hither and thither.
There being no lighting place, she returned.
I let go a raven; he left.
The raven went, and saw the recession of waters.
He ate, he waded about in the mire, he did not return.
I debarked; to the four winds I presented an offering;
I presented a libation upon the top of the mountain.

Ira M. Price, in *The Monuments and the Old Testament.*

The creation and the flood narratives are not the inventions or imaginations of Hebrew writers; neither are they what might be called inward revelations to the minds of the writers. They are reproductions of traditions and modes of thought common to a large division of the human race. They are a part of the heritage of thought which Israel brought with it from its cradle in the East; and which, lying in its mind, was afterwards modified by the religion of Jehovah, not obliterated, but shot through and illuminated with rays of true religious thought. *A. B. Davidson.*

3. *The earth.* The word translated "earth" in our English version has not only the meaning of "the world" as a whole, but other meanings much more limited. Thus it often stands for Palestine alone, and even for a small district around a town, or for a field or a plot of ground. Besides, we must not forget that such words are always to be understood according to the meaning attached to them by the age or people among whom they are used. But the limited sense in which they used the most general phrases — just as we ourselves often do when we wish to create a vivid impression of wide extent or great number — is seen from the usage of their descendants, in the New Testament. When St. Luke speaks of Jews dwelling at Jerusalem out of "every nation under heaven" (Acts 2.5), it would surely be wrong to press this to a literal exactness. When St. Paul says that the faith of the obscure converts in Rome were spoken of "throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1.8), he could not have meant the whole round orb, but only the Roman empire. And would any one think of taking in the modern geographical sense his declaration that already, when he was writing to the Colossians, the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1.23)?

What region the flood actually covered must always remain more or less a matter of conjecture. *Cunningham Geikie, Hours with the Bible.*

8. *He sent forth a dove.* No bird is more frequently mentioned in Scripture, and no bird holds a place of more hallowed interest in Bible natural history, whether in the Old or New Testaments. The dove is mentioned more than fifty times in the sacred writings. *H. B. Tristram.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

7. *A raven.* In the ancient world, the raven was regarded as a prophetic bird, and was therefore held sacred to Apollo. It was thus esteemed among the Arabians, who assumed to understand the voice and flight of the birds.

Especially was it regarded as a prophet of the weather, as inferred from its flight and cry. *Knobel.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Ararat, paragraphs 3 and 4; Babel, paragraph 19.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. If you are reading the life of Daniel Webster, and the writer tells you that he showed great skill in argument even as a boy, are you as likely to remember these facts as you are when you read the story about Daniel and his brother Ezekiel and the woodchuck — how the boys caught the woodchuck and before the father as judge Ezekiel argued that it should be killed because it did so much harm to the farm crops, and Daniel pleaded for the little creature's life till the stern father exclaimed, "Ezekiel, you let that woodchuck go!" Or does the statement that Daniel had a wonderful memory make as much impression on you as the knowledge that when a very young boy he bought a cotton handkerchief on which was printed the Constitution of the United States and in a few hours could repeat it all from memory? We learn more about people by seeing or hearing of their deeds than we do by mere descriptions of their talents or character. The whole Bible is a collection of sixty-six different books, whose purpose is to show us God and our relation to Him. If the various writers who had a special knowledge of God merely told us that He was powerful, just, and merciful, we would not realize these attributes of His nature as we do when we see His power in the creation of the world, His justice in punishing Adam and Eve for their disobedience, and His mercifulness in protecting Cain. His justice is shown again in our lesson about the Deluge.

For Older Pupils. "The fire in London was a blessing," says Macaulay; "it burned down the city, but it burned out the plague." The French Revolution Wendell Phillips calls "the greatest blessing of modern times." There are many great disasters which we now see were necessary and salutary, and among them must be reckoned the Deluge. The Flood came that God's purpose for mankind might be furthered. The antidiluvians were abnormally wicked, there was in them no admixture of good, and it was expedient that they should perish in order that the whole after world might benefit from their destruction.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I God's Judgment on Sin

What the Flood Declares. It was through God's dealings with men in providence that His people learned to know Him. The readiness of certain races to perceive God may be gathered from the quickness with which they deduced from the Flood that God was a holy God. The instinct of conscience was seen in their referring to their own sins this devastating visitation. In that event God conveyed to men the impression that His holiness was genuine and essential. One of the fundamental lessons which men could receive was then given, and it was intelligible to the dullest mind. And all through the history of Israel, in the calamities that followed wrong-doing, in the disgrace and

weakness that followed unfaithfulness to God, the people with always increasing clearness recognized that it was a righteous and gracious God who was governing them. They got nearer and nearer to a true insight into His character, and this they did by means of the revelation He made of Himself in ordering the events which formed their history. *Marcus Dods, The Bible, its Origin and Nature.*

This Flood is occurring every day; this judgment upon sin never ceases; this protection of a righteous seed is an eternal fact! How long shall we live in the mere letter and have only a history instead of a revelation,—a memorandum book instead of a living Father? That there was a flood exactly as is described in the Bible I have not as much as a shadow of a doubt; but even if I took it as an allegory, or a typical judgment given in parable, I should seize the account as one that is more profoundly true than any mere fact could ever be. Look at it! God morally angry, righteousness asserted, sin judged, goodness preserved, every honest heart demands that it be taken as true. *Joseph Parker, People's Bible.*

God must condemn. There are but four attitudes possible in any being toward sin,—ignorance, indifference, consent, condemnation. God the Righteous can not be ignorant; God the Righteous can not be indifferent; God the Righteous can not consent; God the Righteous must condemn, *must* under the moral necessity of His Being. *Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

Every Sin earns its Penalty. God's retribution is a great deal more analogous to the unimpassioned, impersonal action of public law than it is to the "wild justice of revenge." When we speak of His "vengeance," we simply mean the just recompense of reward which divinely dogs all sin. There is one saying in Scripture which puts the whole matter in its true light; "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord;" the last clause of which interprets the first.

Moses dies on Pisgah, Aaron is stripped of his priestly robes by his brother's hand, and left alone amongst the clouds and the eagles, on the solitary summit of the mountain, and yet Moses and Aaron knew themselves forgiven the sins for which they died those lonely deaths. And these are but instances of what is universally true, that the sin which is pardoned is also "avenged," in the sense of having retribution dealt out to it.

Take two men, boon companions, who together have wasted their substance in riotous living. One of them is converted, as we call it, becomes a Christian, knows himself forgiven. The other one is not. Is he less certain to have a corrugated liver than the other? Will the disease, the pauperism, the ruined position in life, the loss of reputation, be any different in the cases of the man who is pardoned and of the man who is not? No, the two will suffer in a similar fashion, and the different attitude that the one has to the divine love from that which the other has, will not make a hair of difference as to the results that follow. The consequences are none the less divine retribution because they are the result of natural laws, and none the less penal because they are automatically inflicted. . . .

A God who is all love, so much so that it makes no difference to Him whether a man is a saint or a sinner, is not a God to be worshiped, and scarcely a God to be admired. *Alexander Maclaren, Last Sheaves.*

II The Salvation of the Righteous is of the Lord

The Lesson of the Flood. The story of the Flood brings into view the principal factor in salvation — the gracious action of God crowning and rewarding the faith of man. While God in His wrath visits sinful man with unsparing calamities, even at the very moment when he least expects it, yet in the midst of His judgments He guides and protects His own elect. . . . It is enough to learn from it those true conceptions of God's character and action which formed the basis of the subsequent religious experience, not of Israel only, but of mankind. *Robert Laurence Ottley.*

God remembered Noah. We talk about God's remembering us, as if it were a special effort. But if we could only know how truly we belong to God, it would be different. God's remembrance of us is the natural claiming of our own life by His as true part of His own. *Phillips Brooks.*

Trust the Promises. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him, says the seer Hanani in Second Chronicles. How many are God's promises of help and protection to those who are "perfect toward Him." Those who have fulfilled the conditions, have made themselves "perfect toward Him," need only to accept the promises in perfect faith. "'An honest man's the noblest work of God,' but I want to say, rather, 'An honest God's the noblest part of man,'" says Doctor van Dyke.

What have you ventured on God's Promises? All men who have a confident expectation of future good make sacrifices or run risks to obtain it. Mercantile life proceeds on the understanding that such ventures are reasonable and will always be made. Men might, if they liked, spend their money on present pleasure but they rarely do so. They prefer to put it into concerns or transactions from which they expect to reap large returns. They have faith, and as a necessary consequence they make ventures.

What has your faith done? What have you ventured that you would not have ventured but for God's promise? Suppose Christ's promise failed, in what would you be the losers? Of course you would lose what you call your hope of Heaven — but what would you find you had lost in the world? When a merchant's ships are wrecked, or when his investment turns out bad, he loses not only the gain he hoped for, but the means he risked. Suppose, then, that Christ were declared bankrupt, unable to fulfill your expectations, would you really find that you had ventured so much upon His promise that you were deeply involved in His bankruptcy, and are much worse off in this world and now than you would have been? . . . If you would neither be much better nor much worse though Christianity were a fable — if you have in nothing become poorer in this world that your reward in Heaven may be greater, if you have made no investments and run no risks, then, really, the natural inference is that your faith in the future inheritance is small. *Marcus Dods,* in *Expositor's Bible.*

III How God speaks

And God spake unto Noah. Was this an audible voice? It would be ridiculous for those who believe in God to deny Him the power to speak to men audibly if He wished so to do.

And yet there is something unnatural about it, something which separates these men of olden time from ourselves, and makes their religion seem different from ours. It draws them closer to us if we can think that the divine voice which they heard was like ours — inward, smiting not the ear but the heart. *Joseph Dunn Burrell.*

We say God spake to Noah, revealed Himself to Him. So He certainly did. But do we fancy we have explained how it was done, when we use such language? . . . Perhaps no account can be given of it but this: that when God does speak to a man, He speaks in such a way that the man knows assuredly that it is God that is speaking. God's voice, in whatever way it be heard — whether as what we call a supernatural sound from Heaven, or as the suggestion of conscience, or as an indefinite conviction of duty, and an impulse which we can hardly explain, is self-evidencing. It approves itself to man as the voice of God. *A. B. Davidson,* in *The Called of God.*

A Voice need not be Vocal. The Greek word Φωνή (phone, voice) roots back to *phaino,* the prolongation of *phos* (*light*). So the whole ultimate meaning is disclosure, appearance, manifestation, not so much to the ear as to eye by light. So voices need not be vocal, if they are otherwise significant. The term is used very often in Scripture where vocalization can not be meant; as, the "still, small voice;" "day unto day uttereth speech, but their voice is not heard." *H. W. Warren.*

Our Souls must be in Tune for the Message. Marconi's new discovery is the greatest wonder of the new century, and, like other wonders, simple enough. His instrument sets in motion certain waves in that ether which pervades and surrounds all things. These waves, like the ripples in a pond, spread in every direction, and when they reach any receiver, far or near, tuned to take them, they give their message to it. A receiver not tuned to the proper pitch, however, is useless; the subtle ether waves pass it by to give their message elsewhere. Thus a hundred messages may reach a tuned receiver with absolute certainty, while one wrongly tuned misses them all.

Like all great physical facts in this world of God's making, this new discovery finds an analogy in the realm of spiritual and moral fact. How many souls assert that to them the voice of God is obscured, and His direct message an unknown experience. The Bible is to them an unreal record. For how could Moses and Abraham, David and Paul, receive a direct inspiration? Answers to prayer they do not believe in. They have never had any, nor does such thing seem possible to their minds. . . . Does it not all depend on the receiver? The message is there, whispering through all the universe. The soul in tune with the divine hears it, obeys it, records it. The untuned soul misses it inevitably — but does that make it any the less real and true? The fault is not in the message, but in the receiver. Once in tune, the message will come, straight and clear, and keep on coming. "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," prayed the lad Samuel in that dark time when no prophet had risen in Israel for many years; and the word of the Lord came to Samuel, direct and powerful, at once. It had only been waiting for a soul tuned to hear it. *Wellspring.*

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and woe;
But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear:
The rest may reason and welcome; 'tis we musicians know. *Browning.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Consequences are unpitying. *George Eliot.*

Character is destiny. *Emerson.*

When God prepares a hammer it will not be made of silk. *Horace Bushnell.*

The world is too small to afford a place of safety to the man who disobeys God. *Ram's Horn.*

God spares not, that He may spare; He pities not, that He may pity. *Origen.*

Not to be angry with sin is to connive at it; to connive at sin is sinful; to be sinful is to be no longer divine. *Joseph Parker.*

Sin and penalty go through the world with their heads tied together. *Plato.*

Before Jehovah's awful throne,
Ye nations bow with sacred joy;
Know that the Lord is God alone;
He can create, and He destroy. *Wesley.*

Crime and punishment grew out of one stem: punishment is a fruit that, unsuspected, ripens within the flower that concealed it. *Emerson.*

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.
Longfellow.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

He that soweth iniquity shall reap calamity. Prov. 22.8. R. V.

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. Isa. 3.10, 11.

For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Psa. 5.4, 5.

The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. Psa. 34.16, 17.

He cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth. Psa. 96.13.

I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the Lord. Ezek. 7.27.

The Lord preserveth the faithful. Psa. 31.23.

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb. 10.30, 31.

Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. Psa. 36.6.

And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. Gen. 9.11, 13.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Justice walks, we say, with a halting foot. But never a day will pass but you may see her overtake some one. Though we may fancy at times that sins are unpunished, we may see at all times punishment actually alighting. The long iniquity is constantly being exposed: the bad habits at length recoil. . . . As surely as the planets move in their orbits, as surely as the harvest comes from the sowing, the works and ways of men will come to their account. Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. *R. F. Horton.*

THE LESSON STORY

The world had grown very wicked since the creation of Adam, so wicked that God is represented as "repenting that He had made man on the earth." God saw that a people whose "every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually" must be destroyed. Noah had found "grace in the eyes of the Lord," and he was warned by God to prepare for a great flood that was coming to destroy mankind. Noah showed his great faith in God by beginning to build the ark as commanded, when there was seemingly no need for it. At last the ark was finished, and Noah and his wife and his three sons and their wives entered. In the ark were also a pair of every kind of "unclean" animals — animals not fit for sacrifice,— and seven of every kind of "clean" animals.

Then began the flood. The downpour of rain continued forty days and nights. For one hundred and fifty days in all the flood prevailed, and then it began to subside. The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat; two months later, the tops of the mountains were seen. Yet forty days Noah waited, and then sent forth a raven, which found food in the dead animals floating on the water and did not return to the ark. Another month passed, and Noah sent out a dove, but the dove returned. After seven days Noah let the dove go a second time, and at evening she returned with an olive leaf in her mouth. The third week the dove failed to return. Later Noah removed the covering of the ark and saw that the land was dry. At the command of God, just twelve months and ten days, or one solar year, after he entered the ark, Noah left it. Thus were the evil ones who threatened to prevail destroyed and the righteous preserved, that humanity might start anew. Noah's first act was to build an altar and offer a sacrifice which was pleasing to God. God blessed him and his sons, then promised them that He would never again destroy the earth by a flood. As sign or token God selected the rainbow, which is to this day called "the bow of promise." "One of the most exquisitely beautiful things in nature served the Spirit of God to awaken in the heart of man the trust that God was not only stern and holy, but also pitiful, and faithful to His promises."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Was this just a beginning again where Adam began? Did God just wipe out man as a boy wipes his slate clean, when he finds his calculation is turning out wrong? Had all these generations learned nothing; had the world not

grown at all since its birth? — The answer is, it had grown, and in two most important respects,— it had come to the knowledge of the uniformity of nature and the necessity of human law. This great departure from the uniformity of nature brought into strong relief its normal uniformity, and gave men their first lesson in the recognition of a God who governs by fixed laws. And they learned also from the Flood that wickedness must not be allowed to go unchecked and attain dimensions which nothing short of a flood can cope with. *Marcus Dods.*

2. A comparison of the biblical and the Chaldæan accounts of the Flood. The Babylonian literature in those parts in which it runs parallel with the Bible has proved itself not to be the purer formation, but rather a foil from which the biblical presentation stands out as a sun-picture. *Edward König.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. On what other occasions is God said to have spoken to Abraham? (Gen. 13.14; 15.1; 17.1; 18.1; 21.12; 22.1, 15; Acts 7.2.) 2. Why was it necessary for Abraham to leave his country? (Josh. 24.2; Rev. 18.4.) 3. What does the writer of the Hebrews give as the motive for the journey? (Heb. 11.8–10.) 4. What was God's first promise to man? (Gen. 3.15.) 5. What does Paul say about the promise given to the children of Abraham being for Gentiles as well as Jews? (Gal. 3.6–29.) 6. How did Abraham become a blessing? (Gen. 14.12–16; 18.19; 19.29; Rom. 4; Gal. 3.13–16.) 7. Read Stephen's account of God's dealings with Abraham in Acts 7.2–7. 8. Of what is the expression in verse 6, "the Canaanites were then in the land," significant? 9. What is the first mention in the Bible of an altar? (Gen. 8.20.) 10. What is the meaning of the word Bethel? (See the marginal reading, Gen. 28.19.) 11. How did Christ call His disciples? (Mark 1.14–20.) What did Peter say they had left in obeying Christ's call? (Mark 10.28–30.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

During the remainder of his life Noah was an husbandman. We hear of his planting a vineyard and becoming intoxicated by drinking the juice of the grape. Ham, one of his sons, mocked at his father's disgrace, and Noah pronounced a curse upon him, declaring that his sons should be slaves, but he blessed Shem and Japheth, who had not joined their brother in his mockery.

Many centuries are passed by in the briefly given genealogies of the sons of Noah. Among Ham's descendants were the Canaanites. Nimrod is especially mentioned as "the mighty hunter," the builder of cities and founder of empires. Shem's descendants are given down to Terah, whose three sons were Abraham, Nahor and Haran.

The descendants of Noah, wandering about with their flocks, came to the land of Shinar. There they began to build a city and a tower "whose top may reach unto heaven, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"— a landmark on the level plains of Babylonia. But it was God's purpose that they should be scattered; therefore He "confounded their language" so that they could no longer understand one another, and they "left off to build the city," and were widely separated. The name of Babel (confusion) was given to the place because of this confusion of language.

LESSON VI — FEBRUARY 10

ABRAHAM CALLED TO BE A BLESSING

Gen. 12.1–8. (Read Gen. 10–12.) Commit vv. 1–3.

Golden Text

I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. Gen. 12.2.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 12.1–8

1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:
2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.
4 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.
5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.
6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.
7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.
8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, *having* Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The Lord had said unto Abram.* R. V., *The Lord said.* Compare Gen. 11.31 and Acts 7.2–4. Did Abram receive two calls or only one call to leave his home, is a much disputed question. It would seem that the "call" came to both Abram and his father at Ur, and was reaffirmed to Abram at Haran, where they had tarried too long. *Out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house.* Cumulative expressions which show the greatness of the demand. *Thy country.* Mesopotamia, which included both Ur and Haran.

2. *I will bless thee.* Prosper thee. *Thou shalt be a blessing.* According to Hebrew idiom the impersonation of blessing, most blessed. (Cf. Ps. 21.6.) *Driver.*

3. *In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Be blessed or bless themselves.* Parallels show that the latter meaning is here intended. (Gen. 22.18; 26.4.) The idea contained in this peculiar idiom is illustrated in Gen. 48.20. It is: so altogether desirable shall be the lot of the descendants of Abram, that all other peoples will invoke for themselves a similar blessing. *Kent.*

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ABRAHAM RECEIVING GOD'S PROMISE—*Tissot*

5. *The souls they had gotten in Haran.* The slaves or dependents that they had attached to themselves. So in Ezek. 27.13 slaves are spoken of as "souls of men." *Browne.*

6. *The place of Sichem.* So named by anticipation. The word *place* may perhaps indicate that the town did not then exist. *The plain of Moreh.* R. V., *the oak of Moreh.* The terebinth (turpentine tree) in general appearance resembles the oak, though it grows usually alone, not in clumps or forests. *Driver. Moreh.* Probably the name of the owner. *Lange. The Canaanite was then in the land.* The land promised to Abram's posterity (verse 7) was at this time inhabited.

8. *He removed.* "Literally, he plucked up his tent pegs. The journey was by repeated encampments, after the manner of Bedouins." *Bethel.* It was afterwards called Bethel by Jacob, but its first name was Luz. (28.19.)

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *The Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country.* Under this simple statement there are probably hidden years of questioning and meditation. God's revelation of Himself to Abram in all probability did not take the determinate form of articulate command without having passed through many preliminary stages of surmise and doubt, and mental conflict. But once assured that God is calling him, Abraham responds quickly and resolutely. How he became aware that a divine command thus lay upon him we do not know. Nothing could persuade him that he was not commanded. Day by day he heard in his soul what he recognized as a divine voice. This was God's first revelation of Himself to Abraham. Up to this time Abraham had to all appearances no knowledge of any God but the deities worshiped by his fathers in Chaldea. Now he finds within himself impulses which he can not resist, and which he is conscious he ought not to resist. . . .

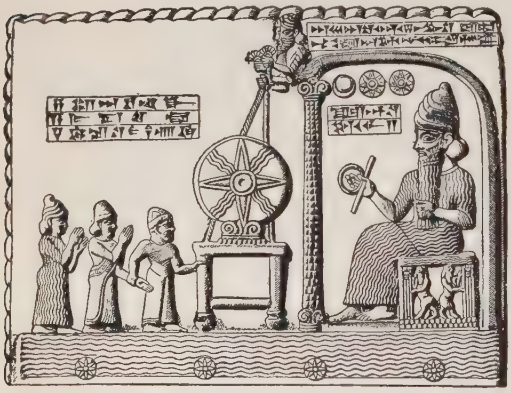
With Abraham there is also introduced the first step in a method adopted by God in the training of men. The dispersion of men and the divergence of their languages are now seen to have been the necessary preliminary to this new step in the education of the world — the fencing round of one people till they should learn to know God and understand and exemplify His government. It is true, God reveals Himself to all men and governs all; but by selecting one race with special adaptations, and by giving to it a special training, God might more securely and more rapidly reveal Himself to all. . . . God meant to combine allegiance to Himself with national advantages, and spiritual with national character, and separation in belief with a distinctly outlined and defensible territory.

This method, in common with all divine methods, was in strict keeping with the natural evolution of history. The migration of Abraham occurred in the epoch of migrations. But although for centuries before Abraham new nations had been forming, none of them had belief in God as the formative principle. Wave upon wave of warriors, shepherds, colonists have left the prolific plains of Mesopotamia. Swarm after swarm has left that busy hive, pushing one another farther and farther west and east, but all have been urged by natural impulses, by hunger, commerce, love of adventure and conquest. But at last God selects one man and says, "I will make of thee a great nation." The origin of this nation is not facile love of change nor lust of territory, but belief in God. No

other account can be given of its origin. Abraham is himself already the member of a tribe well-off and likely to be well-off; he has no large family to provide for, but he is separated from his kindred and country, and led out to be himself a new beginning, and this because, as he himself throughout his life said, he heard God's call and responded to it. *Marcus Dods, Expositor's Bible.*

6. *Into the land of Canaan they came.* This was about 2250 B. C., according to Professor Sayce and other scholars who make Abraham contemporary with Hammurabi, whose code of laws was discovered at Susa in 1901. Chaldea and Egypt were the great centers of civilization. "Nineveh was the center of a kingdom of warriors, Babylon the abode of scholars; and the well-spring of all this is to be found in the work of Hammurabi."

7. *The Lord appeared unto Abram.* Born and nurtured among a race which worshiped all the host of Heaven with cruel and impure rites, Abraham renounced his native idolatry for the service of the only true God. If we ask, "How came he to know God? By what process of thought did he reach the conviction that Jehovah was the true Lord of men, and that He alone should be served?" Holy Scripture yields no reply save this, "The Lord appeared unto him; the Lord spake with him, and bade him leave the land of his nativity, and promised to show him a better land. It gives us no hint of the process by which Abraham rose from superstition to faith, no hint at all as to how he was prepared to see God when He appeared.



Worshiping the Babylonian Sun-God. From a Stone Tablet in the British Museum

If we would learn the story of Abraham's "conversion," we must turn from Scripture to an ancient tradition which is preserved in the literature of each of the great races which sprang from him, the Arabs and the Hebrews. This antique tradition, which doubtless has some basis of truth, is thus given in the Koran: "When night overshadowed him, Abraham saw a star, and said, 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said, 'I like not those that set.' And when he saw the moon rising, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon declined, he said, 'Verily, if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one of those who err.' And when he saw the sun rising, he said, 'This is my Lord, for this is greater than stars or moon.' But when the sun went down, he said, 'O my people, I am clear of these things! I turn my face to Him who made both Heaven and earth!'"

Whatever credence we may give to this venerable tradition, or withhold from it, we can hardly doubt that it was in some such way as this that Abraham was convinced of the impotence of the gods of light and fire whom his fathers propitiated with human sacrifices, and was taught to turn to Him who made the sun to rule by day, the moon and the stars to rule by night; for it is thus, in all ages, God prepares men to know Him. *Samuel Cox,* in *The Expositor.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *The Lord had said unto Abram.* The writer did not, any more than the Oriental of the present day, imagine that God spoke to the outward ear. "God has spoken to me," is a common Arab phrase to-day when a man feels a deep impression on his soul. Even we use the term — a call from God, a warning from God — and many a man and woman, on whom the power of a great idea falls, has heard now, as Mohammed heard of old, the call of Abraham — "Get you forth from your father's house into another place," and hearing has obeyed. *Stopford A. Brooke.*

5. *They went forth.* Such as we see the Bedouins now starting on a pilgrimage or journey, were Abraham and his sister's son when they went forth to go into the land of Canaan. All the substance that they had gathered was heaped high on the backs of their kneeling camels. The slaves that they had bought in Haran ran along by their sides. Round about them are their flocks of sheep and goats, and the asses moving underneath the towering forms of the camels. The chief is there, amidst the stir of movement, or resting at noon within his black tent, marked out from the rest by his cloak of brightest scarlet, by the fillet of rope which binds the loose handkerchief round his head, by the spear which he holds in his hand to guide the march and to fix the encampment. The chief's wife, the princess of the tribe, is there in her own tent (Gen. 24.67), to make the cakes, and prepare the usual meal of milk and butter (Gen. 18. 2–8); the slave or the child is ready to bring in the red lentile soup for the weary hunter (24.34), or to kill the calf for the unexpected guest. *Stanley.*

7. *Builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.* According to the belief of antiquity, the place where there had been a theophany was a sacred spot. *Dillmann.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mesopotamia, paragraph 22; Ur, paragraphs 17, 20, 21; Haran, paragraphs 23–25; Shechem, paragraph 136; Bethel, paragraph 138; Ai, paragraph 139; Canaan, paragraph 83; the Canaanites, paragraph 118.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. "This is where Baron Rothschild lives," the cabman tells the stranger who is seeing the sights of London; for he takes it for granted that one will wish to see where this very wealthy Jew lives. The observing stranger notices that the cornice on one end of the palace is not finished. He knows that Rothschild could afford to have it finished, and he either thinks it a mark of negligence, or he comments on this singular neglect, and then the cabman explains. It is because Rothschild is a very strict Jew, and it is customary among the strictest Jews to leave some part of their houses unfinished. Why is this? For answer, we must go back several thousand years to the time of Abraham. What does the first verse of our lesson say about him? To show that they consider themselves, like Abraham, pilgrims and strangers on the earth, merely sojourning here on their way to a better land, the strict Jews of to-day do not wholly finish their houses.

For Older Pupils. At the beginning of the twelfth chapter of Genesis

we pass from the history of humanity in general to the history of the Chosen People of God, from universal history to national history. The first eleven chapters have shown us God the Creator, the beginning of life on the earth, the multiplication and division of humanity as a whole. Now we take up the life of Abram, the greatest of the patriarchs, and on May 6th we conclude our study of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. In these lessons we see God teaching the patriarchs that everything comes from Him, by His grace, that "The Lord knoweth them that are his," as our well-chosen Golden Text for the quarter states.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Giving up Present Good for Future Gain

What Abraham lost and gained. It was not interest that moved Abraham to quit his native land. Interest would rather have kept him where he was. It was a gorgeous land in which he dwelt. All around was luxuriance, both of nature and life, and a society distinguished by vigor, both of body and mind, advancing like a broad tide in all that renders man famous and life high. This was what Abraham was bidden to go out from. And before him lay the trackless desert which seemed to bound the habited globe; and behind it the sun went down, and all was unknown.

Neither was it love of adventure or restlessness that led him on. He had attained an age when adventure ceases to be attractive, he was more than three score and ten.

The kind of feeling he had was, that it was God that was bidding him go out, and that it was God that was going to lead him; and that he would have more of God, even perfect knowledge and fellowship with God, when once he had reached that place whither he was journeying. *A. B. Davidson, The Called of God.*

Selling Birthrights for Messes of Pottage. Esau was a nobler character than Jacob in some respects, but he was what the New Testament calls a profane person; that is, he was fickle, impulsive, shallow; a man who could let present pleasure draw his thoughts away from solid future advantage; a man who could not bear present inconvenience or pain for the sake of future honor. He was hungry and wanted something to eat, and he despised his birthright and sold it.

You may see Esau to-day at school and college. What a popular fellow! bold, strong, picked out as a promising candidate for an athletic team the first day the trainer saw him. Such a voice for singing, such natural fire of oratory, such dramatic genius! And as to studies, a dozen persons will tell you that Esau might lead the class if he cared to try. And then such generous impulses! He will always stand his turn at treating — even if his landlady should have to wait a year or two for her bill. A splendid fellow, this Esau; everybody likes him; yes, even his landlady does.

He cuts a great figure in class, Freshman year. Sophomore year — why, somehow you do not hear so much about Esau as you did a year ago. And Junior, Senior year — he is not in college now. Nobody knows exactly what became of him; some one thinks he is working on a farm, and another has heard that he is a clerk in a store, and the next man thinks he is dead. He

has not turned out as he promised. He had no staying power. It was not in him to keep going. The real trouble was that he despised his birthright. What birthright? Any birthright — any of these invisible things, these future ideal advantages. They seemed pleasant enough to talk about, but Esau could never take any real trouble day after day to get them. When he was downright hungry he would sell any one of them for a mess of pottage. "What is the use of studying this evening, when so much fun is going on?" "What is the use of pinching myself to economize, when it is so easy — at first — to borrow money or run up a bill?" And so Esau comes to grief before his course is half over. The college knows him no more. *William R. Richards,* in *God's Choice of Men.*

Which is more Important? From what does falsehood come but from a desire to get out of some present difficulty without any thought of the far greater difficulties into which that falsehood will lead one later? "A lie is awful handy to get you out of a scrape," says the boy. Yes, perhaps it is "handy" for the present scrape, but what about the future scrapes into which his reputation for untruthfulness will inevitably bring him? A Christian physician, when asked if he would tell a patient an untruth about his health if he thought it would help in the patient's recovery, replied: "I dare not. The faith my patients have in my truthfulness is one of my best means for helping them back to health. If I were to undermine that faith by falsehoods, I should be sacrificing for one man's benefit what I am entrusted with for the good of many."

Doctor Hamlin gives this instance: A young boy was siting on the bank of a river in Germany a good many years ago reading a blood-and-thunder novel. Soon he found himself getting all stirred up from the depths of his nature by it. He closed the book and said: "This won't do; I am injuring myself; I can't study so well after reading this; here goes"— and he threw the book into the river. It was Fichte, one of the greatest philosophers Germany has ever produced.

II Be thou a Blessing

The Command to Abraham. The promise takes rather the form of a command, "and be thou a blessing" R. V. Abram is to be the channel and bearer of divine blessing to others. He and his descendants are chosen, not only for salvation, but for service. Religion is not a possession to keep, but a blessing to share, a light to diffuse, a life to communicate. We are not redeemed just to be happy; we are saved to serve. The believer is so blessed in himself that he has a surplus and overflow of blessing for others. "The greatest felicity that felicity hath," says Hooker, "is to spread and enlarge itself." *James Strachan, Hebrew Ideals.*

Blessed are the Happiness-makers! Blessed are they who with humble talents make themselves like the mignonette, creators of fragrance and peace! Thrice blessed are they who with lofty talents emulate the vines that climbing high never forget to blossom, and the higher they climb do ever shed sweet blossoms upon those beneath! No single great deed is comparable for a moment to the multitude of little gentlenesses performed by those who scatter happiness on every side and strew all life with hope and good cheer. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

An Unconscious Blessing. In *Pippa Passes* the ignorant factory girl, as insignificant in the eyes of those whose splendid lot she admires, as the gnats that buzz in the summer sun, by her own sweet cheerfulness, her happy

songs, the unsophisticated faith that rings in her simple hymns, is touching those great lives to divine and eternal issues, lifting the haughty, sinning soul from hell to Heaven. "Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone" — to be sure he did not! If he had known that it was shining it would not have shone! It is the influence we never try to exert, which we do not know we are exerting, that tells. It is great to do; it is greater to be. *Charles F. Aked.*

In one of the old seventeenth-century miracle plays is a stage direction full of lovely suggestiveness: "Enter a song, singing." Is it not a description of many lives we all know, quiet, gentle, self-forgetful souls who, unconscious that any are listening, make music over their daily tasks and bless the world thereby? There is need for courage in the world and wisdom and patience and great love, but there is need no less for those whose lives are as songs, singing. *Youth's Companion.*

The Duty of being a Blessing. The French guide in a story by Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews utters this beautiful little bit of philosophy about the duty of being a blessing to others in times of cheerfulness and trouble. "I think it is wise in our life to be like the little River *Là-bas.* One can not deny that it does its best in every part. It is gay where the sands are smooth under the water and the sun shines through it. Oh, yes! and it is of a good coolness in the shadows near the logs of the shore. But one sees easily that it laughs most in the rapids, where the rocks are thick. Is it not true, Madame?"

"Do any hearts beat faster,
Do any faces brighten
To hear your footsteps on the stair?"

III They went forth to go into the Land of Canaan; and into the Land of Canaan they came

Life a Reliability Run. Since automobiles have come into general use there is held each year a contest called the "Reliability Run," and the winner in the contest is not the auto which can go at the greatest speed, but the auto which best stands the wear and tear of successive days of travel, the auto which holds out best to the end of the trip. Is not life such a "reliability run"? In the business world is it not he who perseveres in what he undertakes who succeeds? Are we not told that in the spiritual realm "he that endureth to the end shall be saved"? Intentions are good, but they must be carried out to be of practical worth.

Stick-to-ativeness. Carlyle said that "Genius is the power of continuity"; in New England this thought is expressed by the saying, "Genius is the power of stick-to-ativeness." "The longer I live," says a forceful writer, "the more certain I am that the great difference between men, between the powerful and the feeble, the great and the insignificant, is energy, invincible determination — a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory!"

In the *Sunday School Times* Eleanor Root has this comment on the power of "stick-to-ativeness:"

"If a fellow gwine wuhk jes' as hahd as he ken foh fohty yeahs, somepin's jes' natcherally 'bleedged foh to occuh," an old darky is quoted as saying.

If we all had the upright, downright faith of this darky, more things certainly would "occur" in this world than do. The trouble with too many of us is that we stop short just this side of success.

"What is the use? We never can reach the goal," we say, and relaxing our endeavors, or giving up entirely, lose sight of success for ever, when with clearer vision and greater perseverance we might see the waving palms of victory just ahead. "He has staying qualities; he sticks to everything he undertakes," we sometimes hear remarked of a young man. This is a commentary that means something. There can be no doubt of the issue in such a case.

The Example of Lincoln. Day after to-morrow is the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Where could we find a better example of determination and persistence in carrying out a purpose once deliberately formed than in his career? Discouragements were scattered thickly all along his pathway, but they never once caused him to falter in his determination. Lincoln early made up his mind to devote his energy to his country's welfare, but for a long time it did not seem as though his country wanted his services. He ran for the legislature and was defeated; he tried to get the nomination for Congress and failed; he sought an appointment in the General Land Office and was refused; twice in four years he was defeated for the United States Senate; and he lost the nomination for the Vice-Presidency. Yet with all these defeats Lincoln pressed on his determined way toward public service, and at last he gained the greatest gift in the hands of the people of the United States, and their appreciation of his character and ability has but grown with each succeeding year since his death.

SENTENCE SERMONS

All mountains are hard to climb, and most of all the Mount of Sacrifice. *Samuel Cox.*

The Bible is the experiences of the great travelers in the spiritual and moral realms. *W. F. P. Faunce.*

God calls to no sacrifice for which there is not, sooner or later, ample compensation. *Arthur T. Pierson.*

Good intentions will not help a man on his way if he takes the wrong road. *Proverb.*

Once to every man and nation comes a moment to decide. *James Russell Lowell.*

There is in man a higher than happiness, he can do without happiness, and instead thereof have blessedness. *Carlyle.*

Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into conduct. *Carlyle.*

One of the blessed, unending needs of Heaven must surely be the need of giving forth into other lives the blessedness which God has poured into ours. *Lucy Larcom.*

Original thoughtful minds grew up to be the spiritual princes of humanity in the quietude of the nomadic life; mere common natures grew wild and savage under the same influences. *A. Gosman.*

The life of faith ever begins as that of "the Father of the Faithful" began, with the solemn recognition of a divine will which separates. *Alexander Maclaren.*

It is good to think that no grace of blessing is truly ours till we are aware that God has blessed some one else with it through us. *Phillips Brooks.*

Put the highest possible value on yourself, and scornfully refuse all those

bribes which the present is constantly offering, and the acceptance of which means nothing less than the sale of your future. *Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Heb. 13.14.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3.29.

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. 3.7–9.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. Matt. 19.29.

The nations shall bless themselves in him (the Lord) and in him shall they glory. Jer. 4.2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

"The same sun that shed his beams on Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees shines on us in America to-day. So also the same Lord who called Abraham out from among his kindred thousands of years ago speaks to our hearts to-day." God speaks to His children of the twentieth century in precisely the same way as He spoke to Abraham. A duty calls us; a deep impression comes from life as we move on; a book awakens our soul; a solemn hour in nature's solitude bids us think more deeply of our doings; a hundred impulses stir us in the year, and all drive us in different ways, towards that which Abraham felt — "Walk thou before me and be perfect." Who can deny that these things are so? Who can assert that he has obeyed all the demands they make? *Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE LESSON STORY

To Abraham and his father Terah came the call of God to leave the ancestral home in Ur of Chaldea. They obeyed, and came to Haran. And there Terah died. Abraham was called to continue the journey. The call is definite and the sacrifice to be made is clearly defined — "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," but the promised land is indefinite — "a land that I will show thee." And the promised reward must be taken in faith. Abraham's faith was sufficient, and in this belief he ever afterwards lived, the belief that he would be the founder of a great nation, that he would be both blessed and a blessing to others, that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed," as God had promised him.

He shows his faith by his obedience to the command. With his wife Sarai, with his nephew Lot, and with thousands of dependents, Abraham "went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came." Only the start and the finish of the journey are thus recorded. Abraham resolved, and carried out his resolve. His first rest in Canaan was taken under an oak at Moreh in the district of Sichem. There the Lord appeared and made

known to him that this was the land He had promised to show him, and in gratitude Abraham erected an altar. From Moreh he journeyed to Bethel and there builded a second altar, and "called upon the name of the Lord." Thence he continued his journey into the South Land. "By faith Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. "A divine revelation does not dispense with a certain character and certain qualities of mind in the person who is the instrument of it. A man who throws off the chains of authority and association must be a man of extraordinary independence and strength of mind, although he does so in obedience to a divine revelation."

2. Abraham called to be a blessing. There are two spirits in every man, and these spirits are contending together for the mastery. In all our relations we make our choice whether we shall evoke the best or the worst in those whom we meet; whether we shall liberate the best that is in them or invigorate the worst. There are men who go through life and do no evil as far as action is concerned, but who blight everything fine and fair which comes in their way, by the chilling breath of skepticism; there are others who have a genius for calling out the best. *Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What commandment did Abram keep? (Mark 12.31.) What Golden Rule? (Matt. 7.12.) 2. Whose wealth (welfare) does Paul tell the Corinthians to seek? (1 Cor. 10.24.) 3. What choice did Moses make between wealth and poverty, ease and struggle? (Heb. 11.24–26.) 4. What were the sins of Sodom, as enumerated by Ezekiel in 16.49? 5. What did Jesus say about worshiping God and mammon? (Matt. 6.24.) 6. Tell the story of Lot's capture by four kings and rescue by Abram. (Gen. 14.1–16.) 7. Tell how Lot was saved from Sodom. (Gen. 19.12–26.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

When famine came to Canaan the dry parched land was unendurable to one who remembered the rich pasturage of Mesopotamia. Yet Abram did not return to the land which God had bade him leave, but drove his flocks and herds down to Egypt for pasturage. Fearing that an Egyptian might covet his wife, who was "a fair woman to look upon," and therefore kill him, Abram declared that she was his sister. Sarai was commended to Pharaoh and the latter sent for her, giving rich gifts to Abram for her sake. When Pharaoh learned that Sarai was Abram's wife, he was very wroth, for lying was considered the greatest of crimes among the ancient Egyptians. He sent Sarai back to Abram and commanded him to leave the country. Humbled and wiser surely must Abram have been as he returned to his starting-place at Bethel, to the altar he had built there, and there again "called on the name of the Lord."

LOT'S CHOICE

Gen. 13.1–13. (Read Gen. 13; 14; 19.) Commit vv. 8, 9.

Golden Text

Take heed and beware of covetousness. Luke 12.15.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 13.1–13

1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.
2 And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.
3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ḥai;
4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.
5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.
6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.
7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land.
8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren.
9 *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.
10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.
11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.
12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom.
13 But the men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Into the south.* Not south from Egypt, but northwards to the southern part of Palestine, called in Hebrew *Negeb*, the South.

7. *Cattle.* The Hebrew word includes all kinds of domestic animals. *The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land.* A remark which further explains the situation; not only was there not sufficient pasturage for Abram's cattle and Lot's cattle (verse 6), but they did not have the whole land to themselves.

8. *We be brethren.* Relations. Lot was really Abram's nephew; but the term *brethren* is used for any near relative.

10. *The plain of Jordan.* The circuit, or circle, or oval. Like the word *south* in verse 1, *plain* is here a specific term applied to the lower part of the Jordan valley, probably including the Dead Sea itself and the small plain at its

southern end. *Well-watered,* especially at Jericho. *As thou comest unto Zoar.* On the Dead Sea. The whole valley of the Jordan, as far south as Zoar, Abram compares in fertility to the Garden of Eden and the land of Egypt.

11. *Lot journeyed east.* Leaving to Abram the country between the Jordan and the Mediterranean.

12. *Pitched his tent toward Sodom.* R. V., *moved his tent as far as Sodom.*

13. This remark not only prepares us thus early for the judgment which comes upon them (chap. 19), but also indicates the guiding hand of Providence which by Lot's choice preserved Abram from association with such people. *Dillmann.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *And Lot with him.* Lot was one of those characters who are easily influenced. Lot went with Abram to Haran. And I think, perhaps, that is just the key to his character. He went with Abram. So long as he stayed with Abram he got on very well. His mistake was in leaving him. Some men all through life have to be bolstered up by others. *D. L. Moody,* in *Bible Characters.*

6. *Their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.* They had shared in each other's hardships, and now they shared in each other's wealth. Not for the first time nor for the last time in human experience was it found harder to bear prosperity than adversity. When they were poor, uncle and nephew had no difficulty in keeping together and sharing one fortune; but wealth divided them, introduced friction, and ultimately forced them to separate. The dividing of the inheritance is responsible for much dividing of hearts. "Look at a file of your sister's letters"—says our great English satirist—"how you clung to each other till you quarreled about the twenty pound legacy." *Hugh Black.*

7. *There was a strife between the herdsmen.* This was more than a halting-place; it is represented as the turning point of Lot's life. In the philosophical and religious traditions of all countries there is often described a separation as between two parting roads, a *divortium,* or "watershed," as the Romans called it, where those who had been companions up to a certain point are thenceforth severed asunder. In Greek teaching the choice is described, through the well known fable of Hercules, between the rugged path of Virtue and the easy descent of Pleasure. In Mussulman legends, Mohomet stands on the mountain above Damascus, and, gazing on the glorious view, turns away from it with the words, "Man has but one paradise, and mine is fixed elsewhere." Often, too, in the lives and conversations of good men in later times shall we see this same necessity of selection brought before us in the spiritual world. Here it is presented to us in one of those instances in which the spiritual lesson and the outward image are so blended together as to be indistinguishable. The two emigrants from Mesopotamia had now swelled into two powerful tribes, and the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot strove together, and the first controversy, the first primeval pastoral controversy, divided the Patriarchal Church. *Stanley, History of the Jewish Church.*

9. *Is not the whole land before thee?* As the two stood on that highest ridge between Bethel and Ai, the prospect before them was indeed unrivaled.

Looking back northwards, the eye would rest on the mountains which divide Samaria from Judea; westwards and southwards, it would range over the later possessions of Benjamin and Judah, till in the far distance it descried the slope on which Hebron lay. But the fairest vision was eastward: in the extreme distance, the dark mountains of Moab; at their foot, the Jordan, winding through a valley of untold fertility; and in the immediate foreground, the range of hills above Jericho. As the patriarchs gazed upon it, the whole cleft of the Jordan valley was rich with the most luxuriant vegetation, the sweetest part of all lying around the Lake of Sodom, the "circuit" of the plain resembling in appearance, but far exceeding in fertility and beauty, the distance around the Sea of Galilee. In this "round" of Jordan, and by the waters of Sodom, rich cities had sprung up, which, alas! were also the seat of the most terrible corruption. *Alfred Edersheim, History.*

10. *And Lot lifted up his eyes.* And instantly Lot arose, and said: "No, mine uncle, this shall never be; I am the younger, I am but a follower; without thee I can not stand; if we must part the choice shall be thine, and what thou dost leave I will take." A beautiful speech for a young man to make: quiet and also great, and full of tender pathos; but, unhappily, never made by Lot! This is what Lot really did; listen: "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld the plain of Jordan." And as Lot stole out alone to take another look, he said to himself, "It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good; if those rattle-pated herdsmen had not come to high words this good luck never would have been mine." And he looked round with the air of a rich lord, and hoped that all quarrels would end as well. *Joseph Parker, People's Bible.*

12. *Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain.* He looked toward Sodom, and observed the well-watered plains, and I imagine he said, "Now, if I take these well-watered plains, I can accumulate wealth very fast. I know Sodom is a very wicked place, but I will not go to Sodom." He at first did not intend to go into Sodom; but when a man begins to pitch his tent toward Sodom, and to look at it, it will not be long before he will be inside. Lot does it to sell cattle. He goes down to Sodom to transact business, and the business men tell him that he would succeed much better in Sodom than he could living out there on the plain, and he would better come down into the city. *D. L. Moody.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *Abram was rich in silver and gold.* We should say "gold and silver," for we value gold more highly than silver. In the oldest Egyptian inscriptions silver is mentioned before gold, for during the early dynasties silver was less common and more valued.

3. *He went on his journeys.* There is no other way now of traveling through the interior of Palestine than the way Abraham and Lot traveled more than thirty-six centuries ago. . . . The camping place must always be near water, and the start must be early so as to make headway before the full heat of the sun. *Israel Zangwill.*

5. *Lot also had flocks.* In the days of the patriarchs, sheep were the most important part of the possessions of a rich man, and the greatest source of his wealth. Until land came to be assigned to individuals, the facility which existed for moving flocks from an exhausted pasture to fresh ground, according

to the season or the supply of water, enabled the patriarchs to count their flocks by the thousands. In the time of Abraham there was no actual permanent possession of land, excepting in the immediate outskirts of the town, as at Shechem or Hebron; and, until population increased, any soil untilled was common property to the tribes that roamed over the district and to those in amity with them. The only claim to property in the soil was actual tillage, and while tillage was in its infancy, excepting on the banks of the Nile and of the Euphrates, the sole measure of wealth was the number of the flocks and herds.

Among these, sheep held the first place, not only for their flesh and milk, but especially for their wool, which, at a time when cotton and silk were unknown, and flax was very scarce, and scarcely to be obtained out of Egypt, formed the sole material for clothing. *H. B. Tristram, Natural History of the Bible.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The South, paragraph 102; Bethel, paragraph 138; The Plain of Jordan, paragraphs 94, 105; Sodom, Gomorrah, and Zoar, paragraph 151.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. There is a legend that Hercules was once going along a narrow road when a strange-looking animal appeared threateningly before him. Hercules struck him with his club and passed on, and was greatly surprised soon afterwards to see the same animal approach yet more threateningly, now three times as large as before. Hercules struck it fast and furiously, but the harder and oftener he struck, the bigger and more frightful grew the monster, till it completely blocked the road. Then Pallas appeared to Hercules and warned him to stop. "The monster's name is Strife," she said. "Let it alone, and it will soon become as little as it was at first." All strife and quarreling will certainly cease if one of the quarrelers lets it alone.

Into Abraham's life strife came and he took the wise way to end it.

For Older Pupils. It used to be a mark of a gentleman that he would instantly resent an encroachment on his rights, and pick a quarrel at a moment's notice. To-day, that would be a mark of ill-breeding. Where education and Christian culture have done their fullest work, there is most patience and gentleness, and yet there has been no loss of dignity and self-respect in the process. . . .

If you insist on the last pound of your rights, the other man will probably insist on the last ounce of his. If you yield for the sake of keeping kindly relations intact, it is at least possible that he will meet you in the same spirit. The spirit of the action counts for a great deal in personal intercourse. To yield from cowardice or indifference or ignorance does not have at all the same moral effect as a conscious surrender of rights for the sake of a higher good.

Abraham was a man of large moral and spiritual stature. His pioneering courage, his wisdom in dealing with the inhabitants of the country, his daring in war, his humane intercession for Sodom, and, above all, his faith and life of prayer, show us a man cast in a large and generous mold. His treatment of Lot is of a piece with his character. They were facing the problems of in-

creasing population and wealth; the same problems which, on the very largest scale, the civilized nations are facing to-day. *Editorial in Sunday School Times.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I In Honor preferring One Another

Abraham's Example. "To the service of God, and the preaching of religion, and faith toward God, there is added now a beautiful and most glorious example of love to our neighbor and of patience," is Martin Luther's comment on this chapter. As the elder, and as the chief of a clan, Abraham might have dictated the terms of their separation; instead, he seems to have been actuated by the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. He was meek, not masterful; he was a peacemaker, not a peace-breaker; he thirsted for righteousness, not for an earthly paradise. Selfishness is giving self first place. Abraham was unselfish, the first choice he gave to Lot.

Selfishness grows. Two small boys were riding on a rocking horse; after a short time of this sport, the little fellow who was rather uncomfortable on the horse's head, remarked, "I think if one of us gets off, I could ride much better." Is not this the attitude of very many older ones? Do people get off their hobby horses in order that others may ride theirs more comfortably?

Doctor Farrar has some very scathing words about the selfishness of grown people. "To most men and women self is everything," he says. "Their whole life is a room, lined with looking-glasses, presenting to them in all directions, and at every glance, innumerable reflections and multiplications of their own petty selves. With boundless self-importance, as though the world was made for them, and everybody was looking at them and thinking of them, they make themselves, their own selves, the whole."

Do you remember how Tito, George Eliot's character in *Romola,* is first pictured as a genial, companionable fellow, but he gives himself up more and more to his innate selfishness till at last it leads him on to grave crimes? The selfishness of the little fellow on the rocking-horse, so natural that it amuses us, if allowed to grow unchecked may not make a Tito, but it may make that uncomfortable, useless, petty self which Doctor Farrar denounces.

Charity seeketh not Her Own. There are many men who are faithful, honest, able, who yet fail to secure the results which faithfulness, honesty, ability, ought to secure, for the simple reason that they are not gentlemen. They are not likable, and they are not liked. They are not gracious. Graciousness is the one condition out of which the individual graces grow and blossom. It is appreciation of the other man at his full worth, and even at more than his full worth. It is a favoring of him who is undeserving or even ill-deserving. It is putting one's self in the place of another. It is not merely the Golden Rule, but it is even more; it is not simply loving your neighbor as you love yourself, but loving him a little better. It is actually treating him with an honesty and a favoritism higher than you would demand of yourself for yourself. Its significance is well embodied in the phrase, "After you, sir."

Of course, graciousness is never to become fawning. Fawning is born of the desire to secure certain favors of a superior. It is essentially base and mean. Graciousness is founded upon the genuine belief that the person to whom one is

gracious has a certain right to receive a favor, or rather that the one who is gracious has a certain right to bestow a favor upon the ill-deserving or the undeserving. Fawning is asking favors; graciousness is giving favors. Graciousness is very well described in saying it "suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." *Charles F. Thwing* in *Saturday Evening Post.*

A Right View of Self. So long as I take a view of myself which makes me the center of the world, neither I nor my universe can be of much use except at moments of total eclipse. But when the center begins to displace itself somewhat, then is the beginning of hope for me. Religious education locates man in the universe By teaching him to look upon himself and all things else in the presence of a Supreme Being, it opens up to him a perspective in which all values are definitely fixed. It shows him that the starry heavens and the moral law derive their grandeur from the same cause. It lays upon him the imperative: So act that thy action may fit harmoniously into the universal order of which God is the center and source. *Edward A. Pace.*

II Take Heed and beware of Covetousness

What is Covetousness? When Paul says, "Covet earnestly the best gifts," he means, "Desire earnestly what is good;" such covetousness is to be cultivated. The word has usually, however, an evil meaning, in the sense of desiring what is unlawful, or even having too great a desire for what is lawful, desiring anything inordinately. It is right to desire money, but when that desire becomes greed, when it seeks to obtain money at the expense of all things else, then the desire becomes covetousness in its evil sense. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Christ uttered many warnings against covetousness, or against "greed of mammon." You remember His parable about a certain rich man whose possessions kept increasing till he determined to pull down his barns and build greater ones, but to him God said: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" and Christ adds, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Lot would lay up treasure for himself; Abraham was rich toward God. Ye can not serve God and Mammon.

Covetousness a National Sin of the Israelites. Every race has, in my opinion, a special sin. Rome has her pride; Greece has her voluptuousness; Babylon has her extravagance. I think the special sin of Israel was avarice. I think avarice is the sin attributed to the man in the Garden of Eden — the primeval Adam covets a tree not his own. The trait becomes hereditary; it is repeated all down the stream. We see Cain envying a brother's prosperity. We see Jacob aspiring to another's birthright. We see Esau selling his soul for a mess of pottage. We see Achan hiding a Babylonian garment. We see Gehazi accepting unlawful gold. We see Dives — the parabolic representative of the national sin — allowing a starving beggar nothing but the crumbs from his table. *George Matheson, Representative Men of the Bible.*

Result of Covetousness. Covetousness is a sin that brings about a good

many other sins. . . . At a State reform school, on one occasion, a visitor was explaining the meaning of the word "covet." As he said it was longing to possess what we ought not to have, and had no right to crave, one of the bright boys in the full room called out heartily, "That's what brought most of us into this place." If we never even wish to possess what we've no right to have, we shall not be likely to crave, or covet, or seek to have, what we've no right to possess. "Thou shalt not covet" is a command that cuts off a good many misdeeds at the outset. *Sunday School Times.*

The Remedy for Covetousness. Democritus so coveted the fine horses and jewels belonging to his neighbors that he put out his eyes that he might no longer see and covet them. The Spartans applauded him for this, declaring it an act of great virtue.

Christ had a very different remedy for covetousness. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God; and all things shall be added unto you," He said; that is, seek first to be and to do that which is right, for this is of the chief importance, and then the things which you desire will be added unto you if it is best for you to have them. Hearts that are rich toward God are rich in faith, in love, in good works; such hearts will not wrongfully covet.

III The Influence of Evil Associates

How Friendships are formed. "My friends," says Emerson, "have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me," and I expect some of us could say that, too. Even when friendship is not formed in this magnetic manner, there is not generally very much choice. We drift into friendships, hardly knowing how, hardly being aware of the fact. We have the opportunity of being often together with some people; we talk to them a great deal, and we find the relationship of friendship formed before we have come to any resolution. It is sound advice to frequent places where, if there is a chance to attract any one or to be attracted by any one, there is a likelihood of his being a man of the right stamp. *James Stalker.*

Unload All Bad Companions. The company a man keeps tells on him sooner or later. I had commended a young man for a place in a bank. So far as I knew him he was worthy of it. But another who was questioned on the point said to the president of the bank, "I saw him last Sunday afternoon with a party of young men smoking on a street corner." His application was declined. His company killed that chance.

Unload bad books and papers. They poison you. You can not handle pitch and escape unsoiled. A magistrate once refused me a warrant for a young man until he could look into the case farther. He looked farther, and found a man who said, "By accident I changed overcoats with him a few days ago, and did not discover my error till I found in the pocket a vile book." The warrant was issued at once. Pure character and vile reading do not go together. *Russell H. Conwell.*

The Inevitable Result of Evil Companionship. When Christians have two aims they are like two rivers which flow near the city of Geneva, the Arve and the Rhone. The Rhone comes flowing down, a beautiful blue—a blue which painters give to Italian skies, and to the rivers of Switzerland. It is no exaggeration, they are as blue as they are painted. The Arve comes down from the glacier, a chalky, dirty white. I stood some time ago at the place these two

rivers join. It was not long before the Arve had quenched the Rhone; all the beautiful blue had fled away and nothing but white was seen. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." If your life be made up of two streams, worldliness running in like the Arve, and you hope to have spirituality running in like the blue Rhone, you will soon be mistaken. *Spurgeon.*

What One Evil Associate might do. Honorable Lyman G. Gage relates in the *Youth's Companion* an incident which shows the value to a young man of being known as one who has good companions. A young man had worked his way through subordinate positions in a bank to one where almost unlimited trust was placed in him. He held the combination which unlocked the vaults and safes in which the money and securities of the bank were kept. In the safe a large package of United States bonds, never sealed, was kept as a favor for a wealthy depositor. One day the owner found a certain bond was missing, and reported the fact to the president of the bank. The president called the young cashier and told him of the loss. The cashier, strong in the knowledge that no departure from the rule of strict integrity could be summoned against him, said to his superior officer: "The owner is laboring under a misapprehension. I can not believe that he would wilfully bring a false accusation. There are but two alternatives, he is in error or I am a thief. It is for you to decide. What is your decision?"

The president replied, "I have watched your course in the bank. I am familiar by report concerning your associates and your ways of life. I have studied the expressions of your character. I am absolutely certain that it would be impossible for you to take the bond. It is possible that the owner is mistaken. Give yourself no concern about it. Perhaps time will clear up the matter." Time did clear it up, for it was found that the owner had sold the missing bond and forgotten the transaction. Had the cashier been known to have one evil associate, no matter how good a record he himself bore, the charge against him would have stood and he would have been dismissed from the bank, a disgraced man.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Religion is renunciation. *Goethe.*

The true man thinks last of himself. *Schiller.*

Live with wolves and you will learn to howl. *Spanish Proverb.*

Peace is rarely denied to the peaceful. *Schiller.*

Be as careful of the books you read as of the company you keep; for your habits and character will be as much influenced by the former as by the latter. *Paxton Hood.*

Lot's choice was within the rights of law, but outside the limits of generosity. *George Matheson.*

The enlargement of a man's possessions is very often the contracting of his heart. *F. W. Robertson.*

The swimmer who ventures into the outer circle of the whirlpool finds that his own resolve not to go further presents a very weak resistance to the water's inevitable suction. *Marcus Dods.*

Every noble life can be traced to a great renunciation, and every ignoble life to a "great refusal"; the alternatives are always essentially the same — duty and pleasure, the austerity of Canaan and the luxury of Sodom. *James Strachan.*

It should be our effort and aim to dwell on the heights rather than on the plain, in fellowship with God and the friends of God rather than with those who practically deny His rule and break His law. *Samuel Cox.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Christ pleased not himself. Rom. 15.3.

I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Psa. 84.10.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psa. 133.1.

Ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? Acts 7.26.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. Rom. 12.10.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Matt. 5.5.

For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Mark 8.36, 37.

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth. Deut. 8.17, 18.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Lot was worldly; Abraham was unworldly. You know which of the two men was the great God-power in history and the source of blessing to mankind. The stories of these two men search us; and we instinctively ask ourselves as we read them: "Am I Lot? or, Am I Abraham?" *David Gregg.*

THE LESSON STORY

Abram and Lot have returned to Bethel where last they tented in Canaan, to the very place where Abram had built an altar. There the Canaanites are already settled, and there is not sufficient pasturage for their flocks and for those of Abram and Lot. The herdsmen quarrel among themselves, and Abram's peace-loving disposition can not live in the midst of such strife. Leaving the herdsmen, Abram takes Lot to the top of a hill above Bethel whence there is a wide prospect. Here he points out to Lot that there is abundant pasturage for both, and bids the younger man take his choice. "If thou wilt take the left hand, I will go to the right; or if thou departest to the right hand, I will go to the left." On one side there are hills from two thousand to four thousand feet high; on the other there is a rich plain ten or twelve miles broad through which the Jordan flows. Lot has none of Abram's greatness of soul. The plain on the east is as the "garden of the Lord," that shall be his pasture. What if the plains are filled with cities whose inhabitants are a proverb of lawless wickedness? He will only pitch his tent "toward Sodom," but in this choice he makes the great mistake of his life, as we shall learn later. Lot journeys eastward, leaving to Abram the inland country of Canaan, between the Jordan and the plain of the Great Sea.

After Lot's departure the Lord is with Abram. "Lift up now thine eyes, all the land thou seest — northward, southward, eastward, and westward — to

thee will I give it," is God's promise to him, and the promise that his children shall become a great nation is also renewed. Abram leaves Bethel for Hebron and there, as is his custom, he erects an altar to the Lord.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The danger of riches. This appears prominently here, in the very first case in which riches, as such, are mentioned. His riches were, in some measure, a tax to Abraham, since he could not find room for his herds, and his possessions threatened to involve him in hostility with his nephew. But for Lot, indeed, his wealth becomes a temptation, which he does not resist in any creditable way. *Johann Peter Lange.*

2. What is bad company? I do not by any means think that bad company is necessarily made up of bad men. Any company is bad for a man if it does not tempt him to exert his higher faculties. *James Runciman.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the account of Abram's expedition against Chedorlaomer, in the 14th chapter of Genesis. 2. What is a covenant? With whom had God made a covenant before this? (Gen. 9.8–13.) 3. What other covenants did God make with His people? See the Subject-Index of your Bible, under *Covenants of God.* 4. With verse 1 compare Psa. 3.3; 18.2. 5. What other well-known words of comfort begin with "Fear not"? (Gen. 26.24; Ex. 14.13; Josh. 8.1; Isa. 41.10; Matt. 10.31; Luke 12.32; John 12.15; Acts 27.24; Rev. 1.17.) 6. What was the Mosaic law of inheritance if a man died childless? (Num. 27.8–11.) 7. What land is referred to in verse 13? (Ex. 12.40.) 8. How did God "judge" the nation? (Ex. 6.6; 11.) 9. What is the meaning of the expression in verse 15, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace"? (See Acts 13.36; 2 Sam. 3.21–23.) 10. What is the definition of faith in Heb. 11.1, 6? 11. What are some of the things we do by faith? (Rom. 1.7; 2 Cor. 1.24; 5.7; 1 Thess. 2.3; 1 Tim. 6.12; 1 John 5.4.) 12. What have some men wrought by faith? (Heb. 11.1–40.) 13. What is Abraham called in 2 Chron. 20.7; Isa. 41.8?

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The first great campaign recorded in history now took place, a battle of four kings against five. On the one side was Chedorlaomer, the Elamite king, and three others, on the other side the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and three others. The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and the victorious Chedorlaomer departed, taking with him "all the goods" of these cities, and among the prisoners was Lot, who by this time was dwelling in Sodom. News of Lot's capture was brought to Abram, and with three hundred and eighteen of his own trained servants he pursued the victors, conquered them, and brought back Lot and the spoil. The king of Sodom went out to meet Abram on his return, and Melchizedek, king of Salem and high priest of the Most High God, brought him bread and wine, and blessed him. To him Abram gave tithes of the spoil, and after his partners had their shares, he returned all the rest to the King of Sodom, refusing to keep anything himself, lest the king should say "I have made Abram rich," for he would be indebted only to God.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Gen. 15.1, 5–16. (Read Gen. 15–17.) Commit vv. 5, 6.

Golden Text

He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. Gen. 15.6.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 15.1, 5–16

1 After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward.
5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.
6 And he believed in the LORD: and he counted it to him for righteousness.
7 And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.
8 And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?
9 And he said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.
10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.
11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.
12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.
13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;
14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.
15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.
16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *After these things.* Abram's victory over Chedorlaomer, chapter 14. *The word of the Lord came.* A common expression for a prophetic revelation. *Fear not.* Although surrounded by hostile powers. *I am thy shield.* Thy protector.

2–4. Abram complains that he has no direct heir, and Jehovah promises him one.

5. *Tell.* R. V., *number.*

6. *His trust in God.* For Abram there was no "law"; hence his "righteousness" was not that which consisted in obeying it (Deut. 6.25) but was devotion to, and trust in, God, of a more general kind. *Driver.*

7. *Whereby shall I know?* He asks for a sign, not in doubt, but in supplication.

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ABRAHAM GUARDING HIS SACRIFICE—*Tissot*

9. *Take me.* Bring for God. The animals here enumerated were afterwards appointed for sacrifice under the Mosaic law.

10. *Divided them in the midst.* Divided each in two halves. *Rabbi Solomon.*

11. *The fowls.* R. V., *birds of prey.*

12–16. A parenthesis, or digression (verse 17 being the real sequence of verses 9–11) containing an interpretation of the evil omen of verse 11. Though the promise will be eventually fulfilled, hindrances will intervene which will long postpone its fulfilment; and a presentiment to this effect reaches Abram in a vision. *Driver.*

12. *When the sun was going down.* This must have been another vision from that recorded in verse 5.

13. *A stranger.* R. V., *sojourner. In a land that is not theirs.* Egypt. *Shall serve them.* The Egyptians. *Four hundred years.* In round numbers; four hundred and thirty years according to Ex. 12.40.

14. *That nation will I judge.* A reference to the plagues sent, and the destruction of the Egyptians. *Afterwards shall they come out with great substance.* A reference to the Exodus. (Ex. 12.35, 38.)

15. *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace.* Thou shalt die. *In a good old age.* At the age of one hundred and seventy-five, Gen. 25.7.

16. *In the fourth generation.* According to verse 13, one hundred years must here be reckoned to a generation. *Hither.* To Canaan. *For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* The Amorites, as the most powerful tribe of the Canaanites, stands here for the whole people. (Josh. 24.15) Israel's inheritance of Canaan is limited to the judgment upon the Canaanites but this judgment itself is limited and conditioned by righteousness according to which the measure of their iniquity must be full. *Lange.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *The Lord came unto Abram in a vision.* Of the nine divine manifestations made during Abram's life this is the fifth. At Ur, at Haran, at the oak of Moreh, at the encampment between Bethel and Ai, and now at Mamre, he received guidance and encouragement from God. Different terms are used regarding these manifestations. Sometimes it is said "The Lord appeared unto him"; here for the first time in the course of God's revelation occurs that expression which afterwards became normal, "The word of the Lord came unto Abram." Throughout the subsequent history this word of the Lord continues to come, often at long intervals, but always meeting the occasion and needs of His people and joining itself on to what had already been declared, until at last the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, giving thus to all men the assurance of the nearness and profound sympathy of their God. *Marcus Dods.*

5. *Tell the stars.* The spectacle of the heavens by night is made at once the means of reassuring him as to the Creator's power, and of representing to him, under an impressive figure, the multitude of descendants who should own him as their father. The comparison to the "stars of heaven"—more conspicuous and numerous, travelers tell us, as viewed through the air of Syria than under the moister air of northern climes—is a favorite one in the Hebrew writers. It is repeated, from here, in the subsequent promises, 22.17; 26.4, which, in their turn, are made the ground of Moses' intercession in Ex. 32.13; and in

Deuteronomy it thrice appears as the standard by which Israel's ideal greatness is measured. (1.10; 10.22; 28.62.) *S. R. Driver.*

8. *Lord God.* Hebrew. *Adonai Yehovah. Adonai* is the word which the Jews in reading always substitute for Jehovah, as they count it impious to pronounce this name. . . . This word often occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and is rendered in our translation *Lord;* but to distinguish between the two, and to show to the reader when the original is Jehovah, and when Adonai, the first is always put in capitals, LORD (verse 6) the latter in plain Roman characters, Lord. *Clarke.*

11. *When the fowls came down. Ayit,* fowls, from a root signifying "to attack vehemently;" is a collective term, applied exclusively to raptorial birds. Reference is here made to two very remarkable characteristics of the vultures and large eagles, their habit of congregating in large numbers over a carcass, and their wonderful power of distant vision. These birds detect their food by sight, not by scent. If an animal fall at night, it is not attacked till daylight, unless by the jackals and hyenas; but if it be slaughtered after sunrise, though the human eye may scan the firmament for a vulture in vain, within five minutes a speck will appear overhead, and, whirling and circling in a rapid downward flight, a huge griffon will pounce on the carcass. In a few minutes a second and a third will dart down; another and another follows — griffons, Egyptian vultures, eagles, kites, buzzards, and ravens, till the air is darkened by the crowd. "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." *H. B. Tristram, Natural History of the Bible.*

15. *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace.*

Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings,
The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun — the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods — rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. *Bryant.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *Fear not, Abram.* Abram saw in God the Friend of men, whereas the law set Him forth, or was understood to set Him forth, as their Ruler to whom they must pay tribute, or as an austere Judge whose anger must be appeased by offering and sacrifice. So profoundly did this conception of the Divine Nature enter into and mould his creed and conduct, and so deep was the im-

pression it left on his followers, that to this day Abraham is known as "the friend of God." So familiar is this title in myriads on myriads of minds that almost every Arab, almost every Mohammedan, indeed, abbreviates it, and will think you strangely ignorant and unlettered if, when he speaks simply of "the Friend," you do not at once take him to mean Abraham, the friend of God. *Samuel Cox,* in *Expositor.*

3. *One born in my house is my heir.* This was in agreement with the Babylonian law of adoption, which permitted the childless man to adopt an heir to whom he left his name and property. If the adopted son were a slave, he became a free man with all the free man's rights. Adoption, in fact, played a conspicuous part in Babylonian law and social life; but it was unknown to the code of Israel. *A. H. Sayce.*

10. *Divided them in the midst.* It was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces. For whatever purpose a covenant was made, it was ratified by a sacrifice offered to God; and the passing between the divided parts of the victim appears to have signified that each agreed, if he broke his engagement, to submit to the punishment of being cut asunder; which we find from Matt. 24.51; Luke 12.46, was an ancient mode of punishment. *Clarke.*

11. *The birds of prey came down on the carcasses.* This was an omen of evil, as when the harpies sought to carry off the sacrifices (Compare Virgil, Æneid, 3.225†), and it foreshadowed the obstacles in the way of the taking possession of the land which was about to be assured to Abram. *Dillmann.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The plain of Mamre, by Hebron, paragraph 145; the extent of Palestine, paragraphs 83–88.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. "Do ye ken (know) Jesus?" one little Scottish lad asked another. "Aye." "Oh, but do you ken Him to speak to?" persisted the little fellow. There is a great difference between knowing some one and knowing that one "to speak to," is there not? A great many persons know Jesus who do not know Him to speak to. Abraham knew God to speak to; we see constantly in the story of his life how he talked with God, and trusted in God, till we do not wonder that he was given the beautiful name of "The Friend of God." We have four lessons about Abraham, and in each of them we are told about his talking with God.

For Older Pupils. You have read in your histories about the Magna Charta, or Great Charter, which King John of England signed in 1215, in which he gives the English people certain rights and privileges that are to this day referred to whenever any rights seem to be in danger. Perhaps you have seen a copy of this document in the British Museum, with the royal seal still hanging from it. You know the story of the signing, how it was finally read and signed on an island in the Thames opposite Windsor, and how four and twenty barons, "four and twenty over-lords," as King John termed them in his

rage, were appointed to see that the King kept the contract he had been forced to make.

Not wrung from God, but freely given, was Abraham's charter, the covenant ratified near Hebron.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Fear not; I am Thy Shield

Fear Not! Would our King tell us again and again "Fear not!" if there were any reason at all to fear? Would He say this kind word again and again, ringing changes as of the bells of Heaven upon it, only to mock us, if He knew all the time that we could not possibly help fearing? Only give half an hour to seeking out the reasons He gives why we are not to fear, and the all-inclusive circumstances in which He says we are not to fear; see how we are to fear nothing and no one, and never, and nowhere; see how He Himself is in every case the foundation and the grand reason of His command, His presence and His power always behind it; and then shall we hesitate to say, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me"? Shall we even fancy there is any answer to those grand and for ever unanswered questions: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" *Frances R. Havergal.*

When the ancient Gauls were asked what they feared, they answered with superb disdain: "We fear only one thing, and that is that the heavens should fall!" If you are convinced of the inestimable value of life, your heart will become as firm as those of your rugged ancestors; and when you feel yourself tremble before some danger in the path of duty, some one who is greater than the heavens and all the visible world will say to you: "Fear not, for I am with thee." *Charles Wagner.*

God's Help in Every-day Life. He who never connects God with his daily life knows nothing of the spiritual meaning and the uses of life; nothing of the calm, strong patience with which ills may be endured; of the gentle, tender comfort which the Father's love can minister; of the blessed rest to be realized in His forgiving love, His tender fatherhood; of the deep, peaceful sense of the Infinite One ever near, a refuge and strength. *F. W. Farrar.*

A fast set hill-fort is our God,
A goodly shield and weapon,
He helps us out of every need
That hath His folk o'ertaken. *Luther.*

When One is Safe. There is a plant called samphire, which grows only on cliffs near the sea. But though it grows near the salt waves, yet it is never found on any part of a cliff which is not above the reach of the tide. On one occasion, a party of shipwrecked sailors flung ashore were struggling up the face of precipitous rocks, afraid of the advancing tide overtaking them, when one of their number lighted upon a plant of samphire, growing luxuriantly. Instantly he raised a shout of joy, assuring his companions by this token that they were now in safety. The sea might come near this spot, and perhaps cast up its spray, but would never be found reaching it. Such is the position of a soul in Christ. Justified and united to Him, the person may be in full sight still of the world's threatening waves; but he can not be overwhelmed. *Bonar.*

II He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for Righteousness

How Abraham's Faith was developed. The faith which sprang as our faith springs, was trained as our faith is trained — by trial, by illusion, by disappointment, by being strained to its last pitch of endurance. By faith, he left his native land, not knowing whither he went, but looking for the country which God had promised him and his seed after him. No sooner had he pitched his tent on the edge of the land of promise, than he was driven from it by famine. Without a murmur, he went down into Egypt, confident that God would bring him back. God did bring him back; and then Lot quarreled with him, and settled down in the fairest districts of the land which was to have been his inheritance. This inheritance was also promised to his seed after him; but years passed, Abraham grew old, and the promised child was not born. When Isaac was born, when the child in whom all his hopes clustered had grown into a young man — fair, thoughtful, full of promise, Abraham is called, or thinks himself called, to sacrifice him; to sacrifice, with him, all the hopes which had made him a pilgrim and a sojourner in the earth. Isaac was spared, given back, in a figure, from the dead; but still the promise was not fulfilled; God does not give Abraham the land He had promised to give him. When he dies, the patriarch has no possession in it but a grave, no, not so much as to set his foot on.

And when we ask, What is the meaning of all this? the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us to see in it simply the education and development of faith. Abraham does not receive the promised land, he has to wait long for the promised seed, in order that, compelled to brood over the promise by perpetual disappointment, he may learn to see in it a higher meaning than he saw at first; that the horizons of thought and hope may be enlarged; that he may look for a better country than Canaan, even a heavenly, and for a better seed than Isaac, even a divine. *Samuel Cox, The Expositor.*

He counted it to him for Righteousness. Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, that is, for a right state before God. Too often we confound our faith — our right state before God — with out feelings about faith, which vary from time to time and are unimportant. An editorial in the *Sunday School Times* emphasizes this thought by the following conversation:

"When I found the invitation in James 1.5 I thought I was helped: 'If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.' That was encouraging. The next verses, however, staggered me: 'But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.' I am afraid I'm a double-minded person. My faith sometimes wavers. I wish I could have a faith where there would never be a doubt."

"Do you mean that you sometimes think that Christ is to be trusted, and at other times you think He is not to be depended on?"

"No, I never have any doubt about Christ. I'm only speaking about my faith in Christ. I don't always have the same feeling of faith in Christ."

"Then it is not a matter of your faith, but of your personal feeling, that troubles you. Your faith depends on what Christ is, and what you understand Him to be. Your feelings on the subject may depend on any one of a dozen

things. Sometimes a walk in the fresh air will wholly change your feelings."

The Faith we need. To be sure of God, most wise, most mighty, most holy, most loving, our Father in Heaven and on earth, to be sure of Christ, divine and human, our Brother and our Master, the Pattern of excellence and the Redeemer from sin, the Saviour of all who trust in Him; to be sure of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Guide, the Purifier, given to all who ask for Him; to be sure of immortality, an endless life in which nothing can separate us from the love of God,— let us concentrate our faith on these things. *Henry van Dyke.*

III The Friend of God

Other Friends of God. Moses accomplished a mighty work for his race, and it was because he talked with God as we talk with our friends. Daniel was a man of prayer. It was because he knelt before God three times a day that he had so noble a character and so grand a career. John was the beloved disciple of Jesus. He knew Him more intimately than did the other disciples, and the artists are right in picturing him as likest to Jesus in appearance, for his close companionship with the Master caused his life to develop into the grandeur of spiritual beauty.

Why is it not possible for you to enter into friendship with God? Tennyson tells you how —

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet;
Closer He is than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

How to become Acquainted with God. There are three ways in which you become acquainted with a person, by letter, by messenger, and by personal association and conversation. These are the ways in which one must become acquainted with God. He has written you many letters. Every book of the Bible is a letter. He has sent you many messengers — prophet, disciple. He has come to associate with you in Christ and by the Holy Spirit. By prayer you can talk with Him. These ways are no more mysterious between a person and God than between two persons on earth. *Clarence A. Vincent.*

Are Ye Acquaint Wi' Jesus?

None can tell the happiness
There is wi' ken' in Him,
Wi' love tae rich and puir folk a'
His hert's fou tae the brim.

Written in Lord Roseberry's Bible.

The Friend of God trusts God. It is not seeing one's friends, having them within reach, hearing of and from them, which makes them ours. It is the believing in them, the depending on them, assured that they are good and true to the core, and therefore could not but be good and true toward everybody else, ourselves included. *Dinah Muloch Craik.*

You can't say, "A.B. is my friend, but I do not trust him." If suspicion creeps in, like the foul malaria of tropical swamps, it kills all friendship. Therefore, "He was called the friend of God," is by James deduced from the fact that "he believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness." Unless I trust God, I can not be a friend of God's. . . .

He would be a strange friend that never crossed your threshold if he could help it; that was evidently uncomfortable in your presence, and ill at ease till he got away from you, and that when he came was struck dumb, and had not

a word to say for himself, and did not know or feel that he and you had any interests or subjects in common. Is that not a good deal like the religion of hosts of professing Christians? "He was called the friend of God," and he never, all his days, if he could help it, thought about Him or went near Him!

If we are friends of God, we shall have no secrets from Him. Tell God all, if you mean to be a friend of His. Friends delight to meet each other's wishes. The humble, earthly friend of God did as God bade him, substantially all his life, from that day when he made the "Great Refusal," and left behind him home and kindred and all, until the day when he went up the sides of Moriah to offer there his son. Abraham met God's wishes because he trusted and loved God. *Alexander Maclaren, Triumphant Certainties.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

He at least believed in soul, was very sure of God. *Browning.*

There is a Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness. *Thomas Arnold.*

It was said of John Knox that "he never feared the face of man, so familiar was he with the face of God."

The man who does not believe that God can speak to him will not speak to God. *A. F. Fairbairn.*

Faith is believing that God will do as He has promised. *Mark Hopkins.*

Not man's manifold labors, but his manifold cares, hinder the presence of God. *Cardinal Newman.*

To believe, not because we are learned and can prove, but because there is something in us, even God's own Spirit, which makes us feel light as light and truth as truth,—this is the blessed faith. *F. W. Robertson.*

When you can talk to God, when you can really tell Him what is in your heart, then you have found religion: for religion is nothing else than a living tie, a channel of vital intercourse between God and man. *Henry van Dyke.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Rom. 10.10.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. 11.6.

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head. Psa. 3.3.

For the Lord God is a sun and a shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Psa. 84.11, 12.

To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward. Prov. 11.18.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. 41.10.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Jas. 4.8.

He (Abraham) staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what

he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Rom. 4.20–24.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Can you venture to say that you are a friend of God? If you can not, what are you? Our relations to men admit of our dividing them into three parts — friends, enemies, nothings. We may love, we may hate, we may be absolutely indifferent and ignorant. I am afraid the three states can not be transferred exactly to our relations to God. If not His friend, what are you? All friendship here has its limits, its changes, its end. God's is boundless, immutable, eternal. *Alexander Maclaren, Triumphant Certainties.*

THE LESSON STORY

Abraham had been victorious in combat with the invading kings under Chedorlaomer, and it may be that a natural reaction followed, and he was depressed lest his enemies return in force against him. It may be that he was disappointed because Lot, whom he had rescued, returned to Sodom instead of remaining with him. Or it may be that he was disturbed because he yet lacked the coveted blessing, he was still childless. Whatever the cause, he was in need of comfort and assurance, and in a vision the word of the Lord came to him,— "Fear not, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." What reward could be his, if he had no heir save one by adoption? Abraham is encouraged to speak out this thought that is in his mind, and God renews His promise to him. God shows him the depths of the Syrian sky, and bids him count the stars, for innumerable as they should be his posterity. Doubt disappears; he believes God, for he wholly trusts Him, and God "counts it to him for righteousness."

God next reminds Abraham that He had brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees to give him this land for an inheritance, and Abraham asks for a sign. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe," said Jesus to the Jews of His day. God grants the sign. He bids Abraham bring the sacrificial animals and divide them in two parts to represent the two contracting parties of the covenant to be ratified. By them Abraham watches expectantly all day long, and drives away the birds of prey that circle above. As the sun goes down he falls into a deep sleep. In prophetic vision he learns that his descendants shall be strangers and slaves in a foreign land for four hundred years, that God will punish the nation that afflicts them, and that the chosen people of God will return to the land promised them. He himself will live to a good old age, and will see none of those things come to pass.

When total darkness comes, "a smoking furnace and a flaming torch"— symbols of Jehovah — passes between the two heaps, and the covenant is thereby ratified between God and Abraham, "the friend of God."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

This I conceive to be one of the most important passages of the whole Old Testament. It properly contains and specifies that doctrine of justification by faith which engrosses so considerable a share of the epistles of St. Paul, and at the foundation of which is the atonement made by the Son of God. *Adam Clarke.*

2. The Old Testament and modern life. In the Old Testament we have presented to us an actual historical religious life — men filled with the profoundest thoughts of God, and living to God a most close personal life, and, having such thoughts of God and such experiences of life to Him, importunate in their desires and attempts to awaken in those around them the same thoughts and the same life. We do not go to the Old Testament with any general conception of it as the word of God spoken to us. We do not go to it with this conception, but we rise from it with this conception. This is the thing which will be made plain to us,— the personal religion of all the writers of Scripture, their life to God and with God. *A. B. Davidson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1 Read the 18th chapter of Genesis. 2. What does Deut. 6.7 tell us about the instruction of children in the home? 3. What does Paul say in Eph. 6.4 about the instruction of children? 4. In accordance with the meaning of the expression used in Lesson IV, "thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground," how do you interpret the words in verse 20, "the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great"? 5. On what occasion did Peter say to Jesus, "Be it far from Thee, Lord"? (Matt. 16.22.) 6. Did God answer Abraham's prayer? (See Gen. 19.29.) 7. What does Samuel say in 1 Sam. 12.23 about his duty of praying for the people? 8. What is Paul's advice about praying for others in 1 Tim. 2.1? 9. How did Jesus teach the value of importunity in prayer? (Luke 11.5–13; Matt. 15.21–28; Luke 18.1–8.) 10. What use did Jesus make of the account of the destruction of Sodom? (Luke 17.28–37.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Many years passed, and Abraham still had no son. At the wish of Sarai his wife, Abraham married her maid Hagar; it was not unusual in those days for a man to have more than one wife. Trouble arose in the household and Hagar fled from her mistress, but returned at the command of a messenger of God, who told her she would have a son called Ishmael who would be "a wild man," the ancestor of a great nation. Again the promise that Abraham would have a multitude of descendants was made to him by God, and the rite of circumcision was enjoined on Abraham and his children, and at the same time his name was changed from Abram, "exalted father," to Abraham, "the father of a multitude," and Sarai, "princely," was changed to Sarah, "the princess."

LESSON IX — MARCH 3

ABRAHAM PLEADING FOR SODOM

Gen. 18.16–33. (Read the chapter.) Commit vv. 23–26.

Golden Text

**Men ought always to pray,
and not to faint. Luke 18.1.**

LESSON TEXT Genesis 18.16–33

16 And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.
17 And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;
18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?
19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.
20 And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous,
21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.
22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.
23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?
24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?
25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
26 And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.
27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes:
28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack* of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.
29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.
30 And he said *unto him,* Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall be thirty found there. And he said, I will not do *it,* if I find thirty there.
31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.
32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.
33 And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

16. *To bring them on the way.* To act as their escort.

17–19. These verses are an interruption in the narrative, explanatory of the account that follows in 20.

17. *The Lord said.* In His heart, *i. e.* to Himself, "a frequent use of 'say' in Hebrew." *Shall I hide.* That is, I will not hide. A common mode of speech in Scripture — a question asked when a negative is designed. Do men gather grapes of thorns? Men do not gather grapes of thorns. *Clarke.*

19. *For I know him, that he will command his children.* R. V., *For I have known him to the end that he may command his children.* I have noticed, regarded, cared for him, in order that he may be the founder of a house or family, and ultimately of a people, in which the Kingdom of God may be perpetuated, and in which the principles of true religion (the way of the Lord) may be known and obeyed. An important passage, showing what the aim and purpose of God's revelation to Abraham was. *Driver. Justice and judgment.* R. V., *righteousness and justice.*

20. *The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah.* The cry that calls for punishment. Compare 4.10.

21. *I will go down now.* Jehovah is represented as speaking as man would speak in such circumstances. *Down.* Sodom and Gomorrah were 4,300 feet below Hebron.

22. *The men.* In 18.2 three "men" approach Abraham; there were two angels with Jehovah who now start toward Sodom. (See 19.1.)

23. *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?* A question for a statement. Verse 17.

24. *Peradventure.* If, supposing.

25. *Far be it from thee.* "A common Hebrew formula of deprecation or repudiation: God forbid."

32. *Ten.* Only four were found, Lot and his wife and their two daughters. While God did not spare the city for their sake, he answered Abraham's prayer by causing these to escape.

33. *His place.* The plain of Mamre, verse 1.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *And the men rose up.* There are passages in which manifestations of God are described which seem to imply that He was confined within the limitations of space, or that the human form really was proper to Him. He is said to have walked in the garden in the cool of the day; to have come down to see the town which men did build; to have been one of three men who appeared to Abraham, and to have eaten that which was set before Him. Under all these there lies at least, not only a vivid conception of His personality, but a vivid conception of a profound and more strictly redemptive truth, namely, that He reveals Himself and enters into the closest friendship with men. *A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament.*

Though spirits "have neither flesh nor bones as we have," it is impossible to speak of them except under the imaginative form of a perfect human shape, and human attributes. *Cunningham Geikie.*

24. *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city.* The faith of Abra-

ham pleaded for Sodom on the ground of there being in it righteous men. The faith of Jesus, when there was none righteous save Himself, changed places with the unrighteous. He went, so to speak, into Sodom and gathered the fires of destruction on to Himself, and saved Sodom from destruction. *G. C. Morgan.*

25. *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* Such a union of the yearnings of compassion with the sense of justice and of profound resignation, such a sympathy with the calamities, not only of his own countrymen, but of a foreign and detested race, must in that distant age be counted, to say the least, as a marvelous anticipation of a higher morality and religion, such as we are accustomed to think peculiarly our own. *Stanley, Jewish Church.*

32. *And he said, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake.*

Look back and see this brooding tenderness
Ye wait till Bethlehem? Nay then, not I!
Under the law doth Israel ever sigh?
Is there no mercy till the great Redress?
See now, amid the nameless wickedness
Love dreadeth lest one soul of His should die,
Spareth and faltereth and passeth by,
Soft'ning the law to ease a son's distress.
Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
Ay, child, and more! thou hast not learned to spell
Love's first great letter: centuries of pain
Still leave Him terrible in thy scared sight
Who quencheth with His tears the fires of hell,
And yearneth o'er the cities of the plain!

Josephine Dodge Daskam, in *The Atlantic.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

16. *Abraham went with them to bring them on their way.* Farewells are seldom spoken in the house in Palestine, for the guest is usually accompanied for some distance on his way by the friends whom he visits.

22. *Abraham stood before the Lord.* Round this spot where Abraham stood before the Lord many traditions have clustered. The place where his tent was pitched beneath the oak-tree is now called Rameh, and is marked by the ruins of a great building composed of huge stones, some of them as much as sixteen feet in height. Here, as Sozomen relates, the Palestinians annually congregated in great numbers from all parts of the country, and held a fair which was attended alike by Jews, Gentiles, and Christians — by Jews because they gloried in being Abraham's descendants, by Gentiles because angels appeared to him there, and by Christians because the Son of God revealed Himself in human form. Thither they brought precious offerings, and many offered animal sacrifices; all spent the time in quiet prayer, dwelling in tents spread in the open country round the central well, into which they cast their gifts and from which at that holy season no one presumed to draw water. The Emperor Constantine, noting the many superstitious practices, and indeed the open idolatry which had grown up around the oak of Abraham, gave orders for the demolition of the altar and the statues which had been erected there; and in their place built a noble church, of which possibly the walls still existing, and the mosaic pavement seen here and there, may be the remains. *Wm. J. Deane.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The plains of Mamre, 145; Sodom and Gomorrah, 151; The Jordan River System, paragraphs 89–94.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In a mission school in the slums of New York a cash prize had been offered for the best singer, and the scholars themselves were the judges. There was no question as to which girl had sung the best, for there was one whose voice was far superior to all others. Yet when the vote was called for, every one in the room called out the name of a girl who had naturally a very poor voice, and whose cold had made her singing most disagreeable. In surprise the teacher called for another vote, saying that the one chosen had not been able to finish the song owing to her cold, but more determined still was the verdict that to her the prize should go. She was given the prize. The perplexed teacher understood the vote when she heard one girl say to another, "Now they will have something to eat at her home." She learned that the girl's father had been ill for some time, and the family were in distress, while the father of the girl who sang the best had steady employment.

What do you think about this vote, was it kind? Was it just? May an act of kindness be an act of injustice? The Captain of the Steamer Slocum was last year sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. He had disobeyed the law which required fire drills with the crew of a ship, and when the Slocum caught on fire this neglect was the cause of the terrible loss of life. At the time of the fire the captain displayed courage and faithfulness to duty, but then it was too late. Was his punishment kind? Was it just? If one does wrong in any way is it just that he should suffer for it?

What was our lesson two Sundays ago? What did we learn about the people of Sodom, where Lot went? Was it just that such wickedness as theirs should be punished?

For Older Pupils. Jews, Magians, Sabians, Indians, and Mohammedans claim Abraham as the founder of their several sects, and there is no ancient name which awakens among them greater reverence. "To be with Abraham" is the happiness in death which the Jews have always looked forward to. They call him not only "the Friend of God," but "the incomparable in his generation." Among their traditions about him is one that in Jeremiah's day, when the temple at Jerusalem had been destroyed, he was seen above the ruins with hands uplifted in supplication to God for the people led off to captivity, a legend which would naturally arise from the story of his intercession for the righteous in Sodom.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Religious Training In the Home

Abraham's Home. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," are the words of the 19th verse of our lesson. In patriarchal times the authority of

the patriarch was supreme. He was responsible only to God, and his will was law to his descendants.

Moses forbade a father to kill his son, but enacted that if a father deemed his son worthy of death he must bring the case before a judge who, however, was bound to pronounce sentence of death if the son had mistreated father or mother. (Ex. 21.15, 17.) In Deut. 21.18–21, we read: "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastised him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of the city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of the city, this our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of the city shall stone him with stones, that he die." Abraham taught his family to keep "the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." The way in which God "walks," Abraham taught his family to walk, and to practise justice as God is just.

A Father unlike Abraham. Doctor Potter tells the story of a young man who stood at the bar of a court of justice to be sentenced for forgery. The judge had known him from a child, for his father had been a famous legal light and his work on the Law of Trusts was the most exhaustive work on the subject in exercise. "Do you remember your father?" asked the judge sternly, "that father whom you have disgraced?" The prisoner answered: "I remember him perfectly. When I went to him for advice or companionship, he would look up from his book on the Law of Trusts and say, 'Run away, boy, I am busy.' My father finished his book, and here I am." The great lawyer had neglected his own trust with awful results. *Talmage.*

The Importance of Religious Training in the Home. There is no field more important than the home. Give me the homes for Christ, and you give me the community for Christ. Where the home is spiritual, and where parents are seeking first of all the salvation and spiritual development of their children, there is no place where effective Christian work may be so magnificently and effectively done. . . . We know of families which prove that children can be saved, and that they can be grandly saved by God. There is the Scudder family; the elder Scudder believed in God both for himself and his family, and God gave him the salvation of his family. He asked God to do something more than save his family; he asked God to consecrate his family, as he had consecrated him, to the great cause of missions, and God did that for him also. At a late missionary meeting, I heard a missionary on the public platform compute the services of that family to the Lord's work. He counted and added together the years spent by the different members of the Scudder family in active missionary and religious services, and he determined that the sum total was five hundred years. *David Gregg.*

Strength of character may be acquired at work, but beauty of character is learned at home. There the affections are trained — that love especially which is to abide when tongues have ceased and knowledge fails. There the gentle life reaches us, the true heaven life. In one word, the family circle is the supreme conductor of Christianity. Tenderness, humbleness, courtesy, self-forgetfulness, faith, sympathy — these ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit are learned at the fireside, in commonplace houses, in city streets. We are each of us daily embodying these principles in our life. *Henry Drummond.*

II Shall Not the Judge of All the Earth do Right

The Nature of God's Justice. Doctor Samuel Johnson displayed a keen knowledge of human nature when he said: "I have found men more kind than I expected and less just." Our humanity may be aroused easily by the sight of suffering and pity for the weak which moves our feelings. Mercy and love are not primarily intellectual; they come from the heart; and therefore they can be quickly stirred. But justice is of the head and of the conscience; it is cool; it can not be fanned into a flame; it is an ingrained quality, carved in the nature.

Justice goes with intelligence. The meaning of two of the Hebrew words which are used for judge are "discerner" and "sifter." There is implied in them the faculty of thorough, painstaking investigation, insight, judgment. An ignorant judge can not discern; a superficial judge will not sift. The judge is Jehovah. He is the true discerner of the hearts of men.

Justice is equity, square dealing, fairness, absolute impartiality. . . . God is no respecter of persons; intrinsic merit alone wins His favor. The idea of an impartial judgment, a reward for and in proportion to the deed, is the great principle of Old Testament ethics. In our efforts to establish the claims of mercy we have often forgotten justice.

Justice always carries with it the associate idea of mercy. God is not merciful to one person and just to another, or merciful to the same person at one moment and just at another; but in every act of the Divine Being mercy and justice go together. They are not conflicting ideas, but harmonious; one may predominate over the other, but it predominates, it does not eliminate the other. *Frank J. Goodwin,* in *Homiletic Review.*

Why we do not always see the Justice of God's Dealings. Take a straight stick, and put it into the water, and it will seem crooked. Why? Because we look upon it through two mediums,—air and water. Thus the proceedings of God in His justice, which in themselves are straight, without the least obliquity, seem unto us crooked. That wicked men should prosper, and good men be afflicted; that the Israelites should make the bricks, and the Egyptians dwell in the houses: that servants should ride on horseback and princes go on foot—these are things that make the best Christians stagger in their judgments. And why? But because they look upon God's proceedings through a double medium—of flesh and spirit; that so all things seem to go across, though, indeed, they are right enough. And hence it is that God's proceedings in His justice are not so well discerned; the eyes of man alone not being competent judges thereof. *D. L. Moody.*

God is always Just. Prostrate yourself before an engine, and the very qualities that make it a blessing make it an engine of destruction. God moves on a track of absolute and perfect equity and holiness, and the same qualities that insure that you would be borne forward into the eternal ages if connected with God, make it sure that you would be ground to powder if you place yourself before the wheels of judgment. *A. T. Pierson.*

This is no local tragedy. The fire and brimstone are still in the power of God; it is true to-day and for ever that "Our God is a consuming fire"! The principles are clearly these: We hold life as God's gift; we hold that gift upon certain conditions; we can choose good or we can choose evil; God loves us, and is watching us every moment; He wishes all men to be saved;

He promises pardon to the penitent, and foretells the death of the impenitent sinner; by these principles He will judge us, and by them will the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal. The human conscience must answer, This is right! *Joseph Parker.*

III Interceding Prayer

Prayer is not Dictation. It does not imply that the one who makes the request has any such claim on the one of whom the request is made that to withhold it would be injustice. If the refusal is injustice, the petition is not a prayer but a claim. If a man owes me, I do not pray him to pay me: I demand it. If he refuses, he denies not my prayer, but my demand. We dictate when we have power and authority; we pray when we have neither. Dictation means independence; prayer means dependence. Further: prayer is not a commercial transaction, involving the tender of so much return from God in the form of our gratification. If I go into the market with a dollar, I can buy anything that is valued at a dollar; but not so with prayer. I can not, with so much desire and faith as an equivalent, claim any specific desired good that may be in God's storehouse, and then complain to God as I would to the merchant if I do not get my choice. It is not a question of barter.

What, then, is prayer? It is asking God, in Christ's name, for what we want; and such prayer is always answered. It is not sufficient for us to say we ask in Christ's name. That will not make it so. The question is, does Christ Himself ask the Father for what we ask Him? If it is really Christ's prayer that we offer, it is as impossible for the prayer to go unanswered as it is for God himself to break His word. Asking God in Christ's name is the same as asking according to God's will. That alone is true prayer which leaves the result wholly in the will of God. *John P. D. John.*

The Power of Prayer. In the last conversation I had with my beloved and glorified friend, George Macgregor, we had been talking of the condition of the church, of the condition of the world, of the need there was of some new power with which to deal with men, and suddenly rising from the chair in which he had been sitting, and pacing the room with that earnestness that characterized him, he said, "Morgan, I would rather train ten men to pray than a hundred men to preach." At the moment, perhaps, I thought the expression superlative; I have become convinced that he was right. He did not minimize the value of preaching, but he had come to understand that the supreme need is that Christian people should be able to pray intelligently and prevailingly. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Praying for Others. It seems very simple to go over a string of names at night and leave the matter there. But that is not intercession. True intercession is the costliest of all things. When we intercede for some one we love, some one we would fain save, when we intercede for a great cause, when we put our might into the intercession — God will answer us, if He answers us at all, mostly by moving us to sacrifice. Intercede for a soul in peril, and God will answer your petition by suggesting to you something you must do or give up for the sake of that soul. Pray for the coming of God's kingdom. and God may appoint you to do that work in His kingdom from which you shrink, and of which you least dreamt. *W. R. Nicoll.*

Prayer for Others brings a Blessing to the One who prays. Prayer for

others will always have a salutary reflex influence upon ourselves. It will lead to a deepening of our interest in those for whom we pray, to wiser efforts for them, and to a greater watchfulness over ourselves, lest anything in ourselves should hinder the success of the prayer. What Joseph said to Jacob's other sons in Egypt, God may sometimes say to us, "Ye shall not see my face except your brother be with you!" It is significantly so at the end of the history of Job, "The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends." *G. H. Knight,* in *The Secret of His Presence.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

He that prayeth for another is heard for himself. *Jewish Proverb.*

The Sunday School, in its essential equivalent, began with Abraham. *Sunday School Times.*

God unfolds His purposes to those who keep His commandments; obedience is the mother of insight. *Alexander Maclaren.*

No prayer takes hold of God until it first takes hold of the man. *Horace Bushnell.*

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness. *Trench.*

Not to help a child to know the saving power of Christ is to hold back a man from salvation. *Babcock.*

Blessed is the son who has studied with his father, and the father who has instructed his son. *The Talmud.*

What are men
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those whom they call friend? *Tennyson.*

Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my great concern is to be on God's side; for God is always right. *Lincoln.*

Man must ask, and God will answer, yet we may not understand,
Knowing but our own poor language, all the writing of His hand;
In our meager speech we ask Him, and He answers in His own:
Vast beyond our thought the blessing that we blindly judge is none.
Lucy Larcom.

God's best gifts, like valuable jewels, are kept under lock and key, and those who want them must, with fervent faith, importunately ask for them, for God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. *Moody.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Shall mortal man be more just than God? Job. 4.17.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. Psa. 25.14.

Let us not be forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Heb. 13.2.

Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. Luke 13.3.

Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice? Job 8.3.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Jas. 5.16.

The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy. Psa. 145.20.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Not for myself alone
Would I the blessings of thy love implore;
But for each penitent the wide world o'er,
Whom Thou hast called Thine own. *Lyra Anglicana.*

THE LESSON STORY

Under the terebinths of Mamre, in the neighborhood of Hebron, Abraham is sitting at his tent door in the heat of the day, when three strangers approach. With true Eastern hospitality, he hastens to meet them and urge them to tarry a while and rest. He has the choicest food prepared, and while they partake of it, they announce to Abraham that his wife Sarah will have a son. Sarah laughs at the message, for she has not Abraham's faith in the promises.

Then Abraham escorts the visitors on their way to Sodom. Jehovah, one of the strange guests, decides to inform Abraham about the doom awaiting the wicked city. Abraham is to become a great nation, a blessing to all the nations of the earth, for that purpose Jehovah has made Himself known to him, that Abraham may instruct his children in the way of the Lord, and bring them up to act in accordance with justice. Then, turning to Abraham, Jehovah declares that the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great that it cries for vengeance, and He is on His way to investigate the evil.

Abraham's compassion is aroused at the thought of the righteous perishing with the wicked. He knows that God is perfectly just and infinitely merciful; he will intercede in their behalf. While two of the celestial visitors continue on their way to Sodom, Abraham remains standing before Jehovah, and prays Him to save Sodom if there are fifty righteous ones in the city. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Encouraged by the promise of Jehovah, to spare the city for the sake of fifty righteous, Abraham boldly yet humbly makes one request after another, that the city be spared for the sake of forty-five righteous ones, then for the sake of forty, of thirty, of twenty, of ten. God promises all Abraham asks, and then departs, while Abraham returns to his home.

Thus in a vividly human and dramatic way God's nature is clearly shown. He is a God of mercy as well as justice, "merciful and gracious and long-suffering," but though He would rather pardon than punish, when justice requires He punishes severely. The value of importunity in prayer is also shown, for God is a "prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. You must teach your children truth in part, but the partial truth you teach must be true, and so have in it the essential completeness of all truth, or else they will outgrow it and cast it off, as hundreds of growing children leave behind the wholly well-meant but narrowly-conceived religion of their nurseries, as they pass out of the nursery door into the world. *Phillips Brooks.*

2. Anthropomorphism. "It sounds wise to say we ought not to think of God as 'a magnificent nonnatural man,' but when you drive this argument to its conclusion it comes to this, that we must give up thinking about God altogether. It is a plea, not against Anthropomorphism, but for agnosticism. What other

life can we reason from except the highest we know? What other language can we use except that which clothes the ideas of this life? . . . As Newton could have prophesied from the properties of a drop of water the possibilities of an Atlantic, so from human nature at its best we can imagine God. Our analysis may be but shadows, but they are the shadows of reality."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell the story of the threatened sacrifice of Isaac. (Gen. 22.1–9.) 2. Tell how a wife was won for Isaac. (Gen. 24.) 3. What trait of Isaac's character is disclosed in Gen. 24.63? 4. What covenant and oath had Abimelech, King of the Philistines, made with Abraham which he failed to keep as shown by verse 15? (Gen. 21.25–32.) 5. What does 2 Kings 3.24, 25 show was customary to do with wells during warfare? 6. What is the meaning of the names given by Isaac to the wells? See the margin of your Bibles. 7. What beatitude is the Golden Text? 8. When did Abraham show a desire to avoid contention? (Lesson VII.) 9. On what occasion did God say to Abraham, "Fear not"? (Lesson VIII.) 10. When had God made to Abraham the promise renewed to Isaac, verse 24? (Gen. 12.2, 3; 15.18; 17.4–8; 18.18.) 11. What reputation did Isaac gain? (Gen. 26.28.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

While Jehovah and Abraham are talking, the two angels continue their way to Sodom and are hospitably received by Lot. Wicked inhabitants of Sodom demand that the strangers be given up to them for ill-treatment, but their purpose is frustrated by sudden blindness coming upon them. The Arabs to this day point out the traditional site of Sodom and declare it was destroyed because the people "tried to misuse some travelers seeking hospitality there." The angels proceed to execute judgment on the cities of the plain, after they rescue Lot, his wife, and two daughters. The command not to look back in their flight is disobeyed by Lot's wife, and she is turned to a pillar of salt. "Brimstone and fire" rain down from Heaven, and the cities are utterly destroyed. In the morning Abraham looks toward the place and beholds only clouds of smoke.

Abraham moves on to Gerar, and either here or at Beersheba his long-promised son Isaac is born. The presence of Ishmael, Hagar's son, who till now has been regarded as the heir in the household, Sarah will no longer endure, and Hagar and Ishmael are sent out to dwell in the wilderness.

God tries Abraham's obedience to His will by seeming to demand the sacrifice of Isaac, but as Abraham is about to kill his son lying bound on the sacrificial altar on Mount Moriah, he hears God's voice saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thine only son from me."

Sarah dies and Abraham buys the cave of Machpelah for a burial-place. Abraham sends his servant to the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia, in search of a wife for Isaac among his own people, for he will not have him marry a Canaanite woman. Rebekah is chosen and returns with the servant to marry Isaac. When Isaac's sons, Esau and Jacob, are fifteen years old, Abraham dies in a "good old age" as promised, and is buried in the cave of Machpelah, his only possession in the land promised his descendants.

ISAAC A LOVER OF PEACE

Gen. 26.12–25. (Read Gen. 20–26.) Commit vv. 16, 17.

Golden Text

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Matt. 5.9.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 26.12–25.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.
13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:
14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.
15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.
16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.
17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.
20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.
21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.
22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.
23 And he went up from thence to Beersheba.
24 And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.
25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

12. *An hundredfold.* So rich a harvest is not unusual at the present day, at least in Haman. *Dillmann.*

13. *Waxed.* Grew. *Went forward, and grew.* R. V., *grew more and more.*

14. *Great store of servants.* R. V., *a great household.*

15. *For.* R. V., *now.*

16. *Abimelech said.* The king shows the envy of his people (verses 14 and 27) by commanding Isaac to leave.

17. *The valley of Gerar.* "The torrent-bed of Gerar." Such a water course

in Palestine is called by the Arabic term *wady*. In the western part of our country it is called by the Spanish term *arroyo*. In winter it may be filled by a rushing stream, but in summer it is a mere brook or wholly dry. Water may often be found in a wady by digging.

20. *Strove.* R. V., *contended. Esek.* Contention, margin.

21. *Sitnah.* Hatred, margin.

22. *Rehoboth.* Room, margin.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

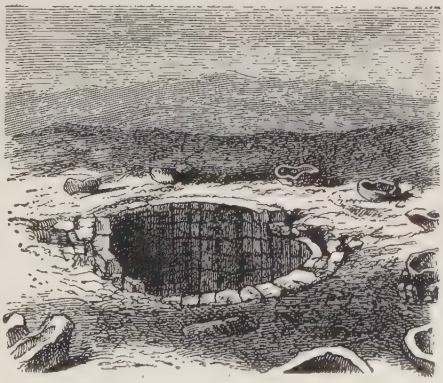
12. *Isaac sowed in that land.* It was not till their sojourn in Egypt that tillage and the rearing of cattle became equal pursuits of the Israelites, and not till after the Exodus that the former obtained the upper hand. *Delitzsch.*

16. *Go from us.* The very act of filling the wells with earth was an indirect expulsion, for without wells it was not possible for Isaac to lead a nomadic life at Gerar. *A. Gosmann.*

18. *Isaac digged again the wells of water.* Some of us nowadays get credit for being "advanced and liberal thinkers," because we regard our father's wells as much too choked with rubbish to be worth clearing out, and the last thing we should do would be to revive the old names. But the old wells were not enough for the new time, and so fresh ones were added. Isaac and his servants did not say, "We will have no water but what is drawn from Abraham's wells. What was enough for him is enough for us." So, like all wise men, they were conservatively progressive and progressively conservative. *Alexander Maclaren.*

19. *A well of springing water.* It has been found that there is a great underground stream of water flowing underneath the rock through the valley past Hebron and Gerar and Beersheba. At Beersheba the wells are from forty to a hundred feet deep.

21. *They digged another well, and strove for that also.* It is our ignorance of patriarchal life which makes us think it unaccountable to hear, in these early days, of so many contests about wells: for on nearer inspection we should find that in these arid regions a well of springing water was a possession of inestimable value. Hence we find Moses, in magnifying the divine bounty to the children of Israel, among other parts of the inventory, reckoning up not only "great and goodly cities which they builded not," but "wells likewise which they digged not." *Biblical Cyclopedia.*



A Well and Troughs at Beersheba

22. *He removed from thence, and digged another well.* In our Father's school are many benches. This life is school-time. Whatever the word God writes on the top of your page,—patience, courage, forgiveness, resignation,—copy it over and over till He gives you another word. Do your best to solve your problem. If it is hard, try hard. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

22. *For that they strove not.* That is the way to wear out an enemy. Hatred does give in sometimes; black, hideous hatred, does sometimes exhaust itself. *Joseph Parker.*

24. *Fear not, for I am with thee.* The waves which lash the surface of the sea are only on the surface; below, the deeps are calm, and Isaac quietly leaving place after place felt the deeps of his soul untouched. What was the loss of a well, or ten wells, to him with whom God was, for his portion, his exceeding and long-suffering, great reward? *F. R. Robertson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

15. *The Philistines had stopped the wells.* During the Crusades, the Arabs filled with earth the wells along the route when the pilgrims failed to give them the toll they asked. One reason why the Philistines stopped up the wells which were so much needed in that land where water is so scarce, may have been that they thus destroyed all claims of Abraham and his descendants to the land about the well, for it is thought that the one who dug a well acquired property rights, not only in the well itself, but in the surrounding land.

18. *Called their names after the names by which his father had called them.* This would appear a trifle among us, because water is so abundant that it is scarcely valued, and nobody thinks of perpetuating his name in the name of a well. But in those deserts, where water is so scarce, wells and springs are valued more, and as they are the general permanent monuments of geography, it is also an honor to have given them names. *Burder.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Gerar, paragraph 131; Beersheba, paragraph 148; regions of Palestine, paragraphs 95, 96; Maritime Plain and Low Hills, paragraphs 97, 98.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. It is necessary to use a great amount of patience in training animals. Mr. Bostock has told how he succeeded in making a lion and a lamb firm friends. "I placed in the lion's cage all sorts of toys of the animal variety — cotton sheep, horses, rabbits, in fact, a regular Noah's ark," says Mr. Bostock. "Then I specialized on manufactured sheep, but it took a long time for the lion to find out that they were not good to eat. Finally, a live lamb was introduced. At first the lion looked surprised, and then lay down and gently pawed the stranger. The lamb did not like this, and drawing back a pace or two, butted the lion in the mane. This appeared to amuse the lion greatly; he playfully rolled over on his back, while the lamb butted again. Now, they are fast friends, and an insurance company would be justified in taking the lamb as a first-class risk." If Mr. Bostock had lost his patience, and had put a live lamb into the lion's cage sooner than he did, the lion would have found out that live lambs are good to eat and it would have been impossible after that to make him live peaceably with a lamb.

Do you remember the great patience Abraham showed when so many years passed before God's promise to him of a son was fulfilled? Three Sundays ago our lesson was about the trouble between Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's

herdsmen. How did Abraham settle that difficulty? Here Abraham showed himself willing, for the sake of peace, to give up what was his by right, as the elder and the chief of the household. These two qualities of Abraham, patience and willingness to yield his rights, are shown by his son Isaac in our lesson to-day.

For Older Pupils. The Lord told Abraham that he would spare Sodom if ten righteous men could be found in that wicked city. Lot was saved for Abraham's sake. In Potiphar's house there was prosperity, for "the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake." Babylon prospered because of the righteous Daniel. When Paul was shipwrecked in the Mediterranean, all on board the ship were saved with Paul, whose mission was not yet finished. God blesses some people for the sake of others. "God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

In Isaac's life we see, as verse 24 of our lesson declares, that he is blessed for the sake of his great father Abraham.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Old Wells that need Redigging

Some Old Wells that are stopped up. As we look back through the years, it may be that some of us can remember a time when we lived a better life than we are living now. Or, if we have made progress in some directions — if perchance we have grown humbler, and more penitent through the recognition of our own shortcomings — it may be that in other directions, we have gone backward. . . . It may be that long years ago, you became a Christian; you can remember how you used to be refreshed and invigorated for Christian duty by the ideals of life which you cherished, and the habits of thought and of conduct which you had formed. And now, it may be, you are painfully conscious you have degenerated — and you are less noble in character than you were then, and less useful in life than you ought to be now. What is the reason? You have allowed the old ideas to grow dim and to recede from the vision of your soul. You are, perchance, allowing the old habits of private prayer and thoughtful meditation and sanctuary-worship and sacramental observance to be gradually stopped up by earthliness and worldliness. It may be that you are letting the spirit of covetousness choke the springs of generosity. It may be that you are letting self-indulgence stifle the springs of spirituality. How can the waters, which may even yet be deep down within your soul, keep "springing up into everlasting life" through all this accumulated rubbish? It may be a good thing for you if you are driven, even as by a spiritual famine, back into the old valley, to redig these dead wells! Why should you allow the Philistines to rob you of your spiritual birthright? Why should you not struggle to regain the ground you have lost in your wanderings? *T. Campbell Finlayson,* in *Preacher's Assistant.*

Keeping our Friendships in Constant Repair. As the world seemed to be breaking down with Doctor Johnson, one stay after another going from him, there came this thought, that the only thing to do was to keep his friendships in constant repair. To most, however, the very idea of downright going at the matter of friendship as we would go at anything else that is tumble-down or dislocated seems an impertinence, and out of the nature of the subject. Yet

most of us must acknowledge that a little more calculation, even in a region where spontaneity would seem the one essential, would have kept us from many a lost friendship. . . .

Few of us have had friendships which have been able to keep fresh and vital without ever needing repairs. Liable to constant change through distance, separation, diverse interests and surroundings, the friendships which are left to take care of themselves gradually expire. But we let them go with the sayings, "If they will not take care of themselves, they were never intended to be," and lay to fate what is due to carelessness. It is hardly possible for us to meet a friend, after a silence and an absence of two years, without feeling some difficulty and aloofness to be conquered, which oftentimes is not conquered before we part. What we then attribute to an essential separation in spirit is often no more than an accidental separation. Without care or attention we find the separations occurring more and more frequently, and at just the time when we can least afford to have it so.

It is more often due to neglect than it is to violent mishap that our friendships are broken. If "the ornaments of a house are the friends who visit it," they ought to get at least as much attention as we so freely and so constantly give to the house itself, and to expect them to continue without a thought directly devoted to them is unreasonable.

For many who are vainly regretting the passing away of friendships, it may be simply that the time has come for them to set them in order again. *Sunday School Times.*

Never say that the Old Well is past Recovering. In one of his odes, the poet Pindar describes the return of a combatant from the great national games. He had gone forth accompanied by friends and citizens, proudly hopeful of victory, but he returns vanquished and alone, avoiding the public roads, hiding himself in the by-ways, seeking only to escape the eyes of others. He has "missed the mark," which is the meaning, you know, of our word "sin." Our sins should not awaken in us vain regrets, merely make us wish to escape from ourselves as well as from others, but they should arouse in us the determination with divine help to keep trying until we are victorious. Do you recall the butterfly in Charlotte Perkins Stetson's poem, that tried to crawl back into its chrysalis because it didn't want to have wings and fly, but wanted only to be a grub again? If this is our wish, if we do not want to "mount up on the wings of our dead selves to higher levels," then we may indeed despair of our future. That there are wells of endeavor and noble purpose choked up by neglect is deplorable, but not hopeless so long as we make Longfellow's words our own:

"Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last,
To something nobler we attain."

II The Spirit of Conciliation

Rivals. If you look up in the dictionary the word *rival* you will see that it comes from the Latin word *rivus*, a stream, through the adjective *rivalis*, belonging to a stream, and the original definition of the word *rivals* is "two neighbors having a stream in common." Since trouble easily arises between

two people who have anything in common, and especially between those having a water-right in common, the word gradually received its present meaning of those who are competitors for the same thing, usually in an unfriendly way. In Isaac's day the strife was over a well, instead of over a stream. Isaac settled the trouble by yielding his rights.

A merchant who is many times a millionaire, recently said that he owed his prosperity to this spirit of conciliation shown by Isaac. His business policy is phrased thus, "the customer is always right"; in other words, he preferred to be imposed upon occasionally, to accept every complaint a customer might make at its face value, and adjust things to suit that customer, rather than contend the question.

That was an impressive object lesson of the ancient Dutch, who set two earthen pots afloat, on each of which was the inscription, "If we knock together we sink together."

When Submission is Wise. A squirrel, lifting his little bush of tail on a chip, may well enough sail to the opposite side of a river when the wind is in that direction. But a man may do it when the wind is against him, and make the wind carry him over besides. First, he submits to be carried a little up, then a little down, and the next you see is that by submission he is actually at the point where he wanted to be and away from which the wind was determined to keep him.

None but a very foolish kind of animal fights a train of cars, refusing to get out of the way. As little wisdom is there often in fighting a disease. The true principle is to stand out, refusing to be sick till it is plain that we must, then cease from labor, draw off from exposure, sleep, medicate, and rest till the inward storm of the fever is spent. . . .

In these and all such examples we see a great principle verified, viz., that a good part of our true wisdom and dignity consists in a dexterous and timely submission to evils we can not resist; that when the ship is caught and can not bear up into the wind, there is no use in trying to make her do the impossible; let her take the storm and drive before it. (Acts 27.15.) *Horace Bushnell,* in *The Spirit in Man.*

John Wesley's Quarrel. John Wesley once had a disagreement with Joseph Bradford, his traveling companion of many years, and they agreed to part. They retired for the night, each firm in his determination, and each doubtless deploring in his heart the separation soon to follow between two friends who had been so devoted and mutually helpful. In the morning Wesley asked Bradford if he had considered during the night their agreement to part.

"Yes, sir," said Bradford.

"And must we part?" inquired Wesley.

"Please yourself, sir," said Bradford grimly.

"But will you not ask my pardon?" demanded Wesley.

"No, sir."

"You won't?"

"No, sir."

"In that case," said Wesley gently, "I must ask yours."

It was not the ending which Bradford had anticipated. A moment he hesitated, and then, breaking into tears, he followed Wesley's example, and forgave and was forgiven.

It might almost be laid down as a safe rule where there has been a quarrel: "If the other man will not ask your forgiveness, ask his." It is frequently astonishing to find that the other man also has a grievance, real or imaginary; and it is beautiful to see how often he will forget it if the first concession is made to him.

We pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," but many a man remains unforgiven because he is unforgiving. Life is too short and friends are too precious to justify one in cherishing anger or resentment. Even if the wrong appears to us to be wholly on the other side, something may be conceded for love's sake.

It is Christ's teaching that the man who brings his offering to God and remembers that his brother hath aught against him shall leave his gift before the altar, and go and be reconciled to his brother, and then offer his gift. Worship of God is so joined to love toward men that the forgiving man is sure to be the forgiven man. *The Youth's Companion.*

Cultivate Forbearance. Forbear; give up a little; take less than belongs to you; endure more than should be put upon you. Make allowance for another's judgment of the case; differing in constitution, circumstances, and interests, we shall often decide differently about the justice and integrity of things; and mutual concessions alone can heal the breaches and bridge over the chasms between us, while quick resentment and stiff maintenance of our position will breed dispute and bitterness. *C. A. Bartol.*

III Blessed are the Peacemakers

Isaac the Peacemaker. It seems strange in the story of these old times to find such a peacemaker as Isaac, one who was filled with the spirit of meekness, and, though stronger than the Philistines who drove him from the land, yet went from place to place rather than contend with them for his rights. His whole life shows that he had a peaceful habit of mind. "Our inner world shapes the outer world for us," says an editorial in the *Sunday School Times.* "Our relations to others are constantly taking character from our disposition towards them. We foresee some difficulty with some one we have to work with, and, if we cherish thoughts of peace and kindness toward them, we shall come through it without much friction. Something from the warmth of the heart warms the atmosphere, and renders it easy for us to make the crooked straight and the rough places smooth. Contrariwise, if we dwell only on the annoyances or provocations we have received or expect, it is impossible to avoid a collision of feeling. We have taken the matter by the wrong handle, and can get no good of it. Quarrels and agreements alike are rooted more deeply than in circumstances. They go down to habit of mind and of character. . . .

It is friction, not motion, which wears out machinery, whether it be in the sphere of animate or of inanimate nature. To avoid or to diminish friction is to increase and improve the efficiency of the machine that is set to any good work. Oil on the running gear is quite as important as steam in the boiler, whether it be on a railway locomotive or on the brain which directs or performs work for God."

A Gentle "Buffer." A novel by Miss Rhoda Broughton depicts a type of woman as rare in fiction as it is common in real life. Lavinia keeps the house for her uncle and his two sons. One of the cousins is a rough-and-ready

soldier; the other is a sensitive esthete. Their old father is an irascible, bullying, loving, unreasoning tyrant, with as much affection as heart can hold, and as little consideration as might be put upon the point of a cambric needle.

Lavinia's function in the household is to be the "buffer" between the contending temperaments. When the old man sneers or rages she must be adroit in ignoring his keen thrusts and diverting his attention. If he sulks she must ply her gentle art to melt his icy mood. When one son cringes under the lash of his father's tongue, she must inspirit him. Foreseeing an explosion of passion on the part of the other, she must sprinkle cool patience on his hot anger.

To women like her,— brave, skilful, patient,— their lot may sometimes seem hard and their gentle task a thankless one. But the good angels know them as their helpers, and every one of their gracious ministries is surely written in the Book of the Hours. *Youth's Companion.*

The Value of a Peacemaker in National Life can not be Overestimated. When William Penn began his duties as chief magistrate, a great conference was appointed with the native chiefs. Penn, accompanied by a few unarmed Friends, clad in the simple garb of the Quakers, came to the appointed spot. The chieftains, also unarmed, sat in a semicircle on the ground. Standing before them and speaking by an interpreter, he said: "My friends, we have met on the broad pathway of good faith. We are all one flesh and blood. Being brethren, no advantage shall be taken on either side. When disputes arise we will settle them in council. Between us there shall be nothing but openness and love." The chiefs replied: "While the rivers run and the sun shines we will live in peace with the children of William Penn." No record was made of the treaty, for none was needed. Its terms were written, not on decaying parchment, but on the living hearts of men. For more than seventy years, during which the province remained under the control of the Friends, not a single war whoop was heard within the borders of Pennsylvania. The Quaker hat and coat proved to be a better defense for the wearer than coat of mail and musket. *Ridpath's History of the United States.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

How poor are they that have not patience! *Shakespeare.*

Quarrels would not last long if the fault were only on one side. *La Rochefoucauld.*

If we are intolerant, we become intolerable. *G. H. Morrison.*

There is only one highway to the world's true comradeship — it is the road of forbearing one another. *G. H. Morrison.*

Be your strife
To lead on earth an angel's life. *Keble.*

We make a great deal of peace with Heaven. Christ makes much of peace on earth. *Henry Drummond.*

Man's work is to labor and leaven —
As best he may — earth here with Heaven. *Browning.*

It is not necessary for all men to be great in action: the greatest and sublimest power is simple patience. *Horace Bushnell.*

When hard flints strike together the sparks will fly about: but a soft, mild spirit is a great preserver of peace, and kills the power of contests as woolpacks deaden the force of bullets. *Leighton.*

No man fighteth unless he meets with resistance, if b. h be of a contentious spirit, he is the better who first draweth back — he is beaten who overcometh. *Seneca.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psa. 133.1.

When man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. Prov. 16.7.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. Matt. 5.5.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12.18.

It is an honour for a man to cease from strife. Prov. 20.3.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Phil. 2.3.

With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. Isaiah 12.3.

Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John 4.14.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

A very beautiful name is given to Christ when He is called "The Lord of Peace." He is the great Peacemaker, for He has "made peace by the blood of His cross"; and He is also the "Great Peacegiver," for He says, "My peace I give unto you." *G. H. Knight.*

THE LESSON STORY

After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac and prospered him for Abraham's sake. He dwelt in Gerar, and tilled the land there, and received an unusually large return, a hundredfold. Such wealth of possessions, and so many servants were his, that the Philistines, among whom he lived, envied him. To drive him from their place they filled with earth the wells which Abraham had dug, and Abimelech, the king, ordered him to leave. Although Isaac was, as his enemies admitted, stronger than they, he would not strive with them, but moved farther off in the valley of Gerar. There he reopened the wells his father Abraham had dug, and in filial love called them by the old name his father had given them. These wells were not sufficient for his numerous herds and he had another well dug also. But the herdsmen of Gerar contended that the water was theirs, they claimed to own both what was on the ground and under it, and Isaac yielded to their claim. That well he called Esek, contention, and the next well that he dug and also gave up he called Sitnah, hatred.

Moving on again he dug yet another well which received the name of Rehoboth, room, for his gentleness had won at last, and the quarrelsome Philistines left him in peace.

From there Isaac went to Beersheba, where the Lord appeared to him and promised to bless him for Abraham's sake. There he built an altar and called on the name of the Lord. Then Abimelech sought out Isaac at Beersheba, to

make with him a treaty of peace, for, he said, "We saw certainly that the Lord is with thee." Thus Isaac's patience won the friendship of his enemies. Patience is not weakness. He who bears injuries without resentment triumphs in the end. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Public envy is an ostracism that eclipseth men when they grow too great. *Bacon.*

2. Is it sometimes wise to allow oneself to be imposed on?

3. In Isaac we see the result of growing up under too strong and dominant an external influence. Isaac was dwarfed and weakened by growing up under the shadow of Abraham. Of his life there was little to record, and what was recorded was very much a reproduction of the least glorious passages of his father's career. The digging of wells for his flocks was among the most notable events in his commonplace life, and even in this he only reopened the wells his father had dug. *Marcus Dods.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the entire chapter, Gen. 27. 2. Tell the story of Esau's selling his birthright. (Gen. 25.27–34.) 3. To whom does Rebekah refer by "both" in verse 45? (See Gen. 9.6; 2 Sam. 14.7.) 4. What striking figure of speech is applied by Jeremiah to those who lie, in Jer. 9.3? 5 What punishment befell Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, for his craftiness? (2 Kings 5.20–27.) 6. What was the punishment meted out to Ananias and Sapphira for lying? (Acts 5.1–11.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Fifteen years before Abraham's death his grandsons Esau and Jacob were born. When the lads grew up, Esau was rough and hairy, and Jacob smooth-faced and handsome. "Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents." Esau was his father's favorite, and Jacob his mother's. Before the events of to-day's lesson, but mentioned here because of its close connection with next Sunday's lesson, occurred the selling of Esau's birthright. Esau had returned one day from the field, faint with hunger, and found that Jacob had prepared "red pottage," a dish of lentils which is to this day a favorite dish in Syria. Esau begged Jacob to give it to him, but Jacob would do so only on condition: that Esau gave in exchange his birthright. To this Esau readily consented, and "Thus Esau despised his birthright." This birthright included "lordship" over the rest of the family, and the spiritual blessing given first to Abraham, the promise of the inheritance of the land of Canaan, and the special blessing of Jehovah. Whenever any one now gives up something of great value in exchange for something of little worth we are wont to say, "He has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage."

LESSON XI — MARCH 17

JACOB AND ESAU

Gen. 27.15-23, 41-45. (Read Gen. 27.1-45; 29.15-25; 37.31-35.) Commit vv. 21-23.

Golden Text

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight. Prov. 12.22.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 27.15-23, 41-45

15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son:
16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:
17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.
18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my son?
19 And Jacob said unto his father, I *am* Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.
20 And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought *it* to me.
21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou *be* my very son Esau or not.
22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father: and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.
23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.
41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.
42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.
43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;
44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;
45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

15. *Goodly raiment.* R. V., *the goodly garments.*

19. *Thy soul.* The word translated *soul* is often used in Hebrew as a designation of the individual, and can not be exactly reproduced in English. It is practically equivalent to the emphatic personal pronoun. *Kent.*

23. *So he blessed him.* This was the greeting merely, the formal blessing is given in verses 27-29.

41. *The days of mourning for my father are at hand.* So he thought, and so his father thought, but Isaac did not die until forty-three years after this.

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ISAAC SENDING ESAU FOR VENISON—*Tissot*

44. *A few days.* It was probably forty years before he returned, and it was likely that Rebekah saw him no more; for it is the general opinion of the Jewish rabbis that she died before Jacob's return from Padan-aram, whether the period of his stay be considered twenty or forty years. (31.38.) *Clarke.*

45. *Bereft of both.* Of Jacob by murder and of Esau by blood-revenge. (Gen. 9.6; 2 Sam. 14.7.)

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

15. *Rebekah took goodly raiment.* Many have thought, and there are plausible arguments to show, that what Jacob wore was the official priestly raiment designed as of right to the eldest born. The term goodly, or desirable raiment, in its original meaning and specific usage, goes far to indicate as much. It is, moreover, expressly mentioned that the raiment belonged to Esau; yet we observe that it was not in his keeping, nor in that of his wives, but under the charge of Rebekah, as though it were family rather than individual property, and an hereditary, not a common dress, and therefore kept by her, as mother of the family, with aromatic herbs and spices to sweeten and preserve it. And thus the well-known fragrance would be to Isaac a token confirmatory of Jacob's pretensions. The words of Psalm 45 are appropriate here; is it too much to say that they are typically associated in their reference? "Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of ivory palaces (? wardrobes). Isaac's own language is emphatic; there is what sounds like the echo of it in the Song of Solomon (4.11,) the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. *J. E. Yonge.*

16. *Rebekah put the skins upon his hands.* A bad man naturally he was not; nor a false man: but simply a pliable and weak man. Hence he became the tool of another — the agent in a plan of villainy which he had not the contrivance to originate. He was one of those who, if they could, would have what they wish innocently. He would not play false, yet he would unjustly have. He was rather afraid of doing the deceit than anxious that the deceit should not be done. *F. W. Robertson.*

17. *She gave the savoury meat into the hands of Jacob.* Had it been I, I would have dropped the dish. *Martin Luther.*

19. *I am Esau thy firstborn.* The sins, the evils, the mistakes of good men are not approved because they are stated without any application to them of moral discrimination and condemnation.

In the early periods of history, in the record for instance, of the patriarchal age, we are confronted with conduct which would turn a man from society if it were permitted to-day. Look at Jacob, much of whose conduct would be condemned from beginning to end, according to any modern canon of moral criticism. He outwitted, with the connivance of a cunning mother, his elder brother. He was politic all the way through. While he was a politician, he always thought of himself, and looked out for "Number One." He was selfish and cruel, and yet, he is not criticized; he stands up as one of the three great patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. . . . It is not to be held that a wrong thing is approved because it is not in words disapproved. It is simply to be held that the authors of the Scripture stated things as they were,— good, bad and indifferent. *Henry Ward Beecher,* in *Bible Studies.*

19. *I am Esau thy firstborn.* Life and character tend either upward or down-

ward, but a single act or characteristic may not indicate the tendency of a life as a whole. You can make a saint out of the good qualities of bad men; you can make a devil out of the bad qualities of good men. Esau eclipsed Jacob at first, but his virtues were accidents, incidents, without roots, and they withered before the hot tests of life. Jacob outshone Esau at last. Day by day he fought his natural badness, and won in the hard struggle with self. The mean supplanter Jacob became the hero Israel, a prince with God. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

19. *I am Esau.* The natives of the East have not, as a rule, attained to the downright honesty of the West: they have been characterized by flourishes of words without meaning; their standard of truthfulness has been lower. And it is hard for the best men to emancipate themselves from the tyranny of popular and prevalent ideas. This is no plea to excuse deception, but it accounts for it; it lessens our surprise, if it does not qualify our condemnation. *J. E. Yonge.*

19. *Sit and eat of my venison.* At first it was the custom to sit at meals instead of to recline, as in New Testament times. *Bissell.*

19. *That thy soul may bless me.* In the Orient a meal taken together is a common symbol of a sacred pledge. Isaac bids Esau take his bow and arrow, go out into the fields, hunt for game, bring in the result of his hunting, and make a savory meal. Of this the two will partake together, and in this hour of sacred fellowship the father will bestow upon the son his rank and place. *Lyman Abbott.*

Desert chiefs, like later monarchs, had absolute power, and could nominate their successors; David for instance, nominated Solomon; the king transmits his government and authority to his first son, or to his favorite descendant; thus the ascendancy of a tribe is prolonged: and Isaac was to give over his chieftainship. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Beersheba, paragraph 148; Central Range, paragraphs 99–103.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. If some one puts his hand back of a thick cushion and lets a strange light called the X-ray fall upon it in just the right way, and then through a shade you look at the cushion, you will see the bones of the hand very distinctly. Is not this wonderful? Do you remember in our study of Christ's life last year how we saw His marvelous power of looking right through men and their deeds and seeing their hearts and their motives? He saw into the heart of Zaccheus. Why did the Jews scorn Zaccheus? What did Jesus see in him? The Jews saw the large sums cast into the treasury by rich men and called them generous givers, while they scorned the small gift of a poor widow. What did Jesus say of her two mites as contrasted with their gifts?

To-day we have a lesson about two brothers. We see the younger brother Jacob do a very mean thing, and seeing only the deed, we wonder that God did not utterly condemn him. But when we read more about Jacob's life we see

that, in spite of his evil trait, there was much good in Jacob, which finally overcame his evil tendencies.

For Older Pupils. Throughout Old Testament history we see a race grow gradually in spiritual knowledge, led up step by step from a low estate of virtue to a higher, and in the process we see much tnat is imperfect and blameworthy.

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

And as has been said, "The sacred narrative about Jacob dwells only on this divine shaping, without a word of condemnation of the base means. But it shows retribution at work. Jacob was to find that the family talent for craft, which had served him and his mother, was to be used against him by his uncle."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Craftiness

Jacob's Craftiness. It has been frequently remarked of Jacob that he was thoroughly a Jew, that in him you find the good and bad features of the Jewish character very prominent and conspicuous. He has that mingling of craft and endurance which has enabled his descendants to use for their own ends those who have wronged and persecuted them. The Jew has, with some justice and some injustice, been credited with an obstinate and unscrupulous resolution to forward his own interests, and there can be no question that in this respect Jacob is the typical Jew — ruthlessly taking advantage of his brother, watching and waiting until he was sure of the victory; deceiving his blind father, and robbing him of what he had intended for his favorite son; outwitting the grasping Laban; unable to meet his brother without stratagem; and not thrown off his guard even by his true affection for Joseph. Yet, while one recoils from this craftiness and management, one can not but admire the quiet force of character, the indomitable tenacity, and above all, the capacity for warm affection and lasting attachments, that he showed throughout. *Marcus Dods.*

What is Craftiness? "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field," reads the first verse of the third chapter of Genesis. The Hebrew word here translated *subtile* is translated *wily* in Josh. 9.4 and *crafty* in Job 5.12. How well the story of the temptation and fall brings out the wily, crafty character of the tempter! His words are a mixture of truths and falsehoods, he arouses Eve's doubts and suspicions in regard to God's purpose in forbidding her to eat that special fruit, and his wily craftiness accomplishes its purpose.

It is said that the ancient Chinese used a character meaning "slippery," and the ancient Egyptians used a hieroglyphic meaning "twisted," to designate a crafty man. Subtile, wily, slippery, twisted — these words are all descriptive of the crafty man.

Why Idolatrous People are Tricky. "A Chinaman believes that he can cheat his god," says Doctor R. F. Horton; "he believes, for instance, that he can put a garment upon his child, and write in large letters upon the back that this child has had the cholera, and the god, seeing the letters on the back and concluding that the child has already had the cholera, will not give the child

the cholera again. Even intelligent Chinamen believe that it is quite easy to trick a god and take him in; consequently the whole life of China is riddled, through and through, with trickery and deceit. The ancient Romans claimed that the sacrifice of a white ox was more pleasing to their god Jupiter than any other, and they could cheat him by taking a spotted ox and chalking over the black spots."

An Instance of Craftiness. When Collis P. Huntington was building the Pacific Railroad an agent came and offered to sell him iron rails at seventy dollars per ton. Mr. Huntington said he had more rails on hand than he wanted. The agent knew this was false; he offered to sell at sixty-five dollars per ton and Mr. Huntington closed the bargain. Then the multimillionaire offered in payment his note for three months; when the agent accepted this, Mr. Huntington discounted it on the spot, and thus gained the interest.

Such craftiness is common in the business world. But such strict integrity as that of A. T. Stewart is also common. It was Stewart's reputation for square dealing, freedom from fraud of whatever sort, that enabled him, though he began life in New York on less than a dollar a day, to amass a fortune of nearly forty millions.

II Lying Lips are an Abomination to the Lord

The Grandeur of Truth. The Psalmist wrote, "I said in my haste, all men are liars," and Adam Clarke, commenting on this statement adds, "Had he lived in our time, he might have said it at his leisure."

When Shakespeare wishes to say that playing on the recorder is a very easy thing to do, he says that it is "as easy as lying." Yet truthfulness is a virtue which all men and all ages have admired, for, as Bulwer Lytton has said, "One of the sublimest things in the world is plain truth." He who has any self-respect will scorn to tell a lie. He who faithfully tries to live the truth will see the grandeur of the truth in other lives. The greatest homage you can pay to truth is, as Emerson says, to use it.

Truthfulness a Duty to Ourselves. Kant classes truthfulness among the duties to self. Falsehood he places on the same level with suicide; suicide is the taking of the physical life, falsehood the destruction of the moral life. An editorial in the *Sunday School Times* upon "The Self Deceitfulness of Lying" says: "Because a lie is always wrong, one who lies even with good intentions is always injured by lying. Many a man who has deceived himself into believing that there is such a thing as the 'lie of necessity,' and that good can come from a lie that is meant to accomplish good, has found the apparent 'necessity' for such lying increasingly evident. He will now daily tell untruths, or make statements which he justifies as 'constructively true,' when ten years ago he would have deemed it 'necessary' to do so only on rare occasions. Therein is the lie's greatest deceitfulness; it deceives its maker more than any one else. The lie is the surest boomerang of all the weapons that the Devil places in men's hands. To tell one lie with the best of intentions, in order to save another's property, or another's life, or another's soul, is to commence on a course of moral suicide. What God can not do man had better not attempt."

Truthfulness a Duty to Others. The father of Charles J. Fox had an old stone wall on his grounds, which he had often declared should be destroyed. His little son heard him say that he intended to have it blown up with powder,

and at once the little fellow made his father promise that he would let him see it done. But it chanced that when the men came to do the work, Charles was away from home. The lad was bitterly disappointed, and reminded his father of his promise. Then the father sent for the masons to rebuild the wall, and had it blown up again in the presence of his son. No wonder the son of such a father grew up with a reverence for truth.

"College men, whatever their faults and wrong-doing, will not tell lies," said President Harris of Amherst College. "A man's word is sacred. A student who lies to a fellow-student might as well leave college. However damaging to himself, he will not put no in place of yes to a president or a professor. This virtue, which is associated with the English gentleman, has become as distinctively the virtue of the American gentleman and scholar."

Truthfulness a Duty to God. To the Egyptians a lie was the greatest of vices. When a man died, his soul, so they taught, was led into the Hall of Judgment and among the statements he must be able to make then was this, "I did not utter a lie to any man."

"Point thy tongue on the anvil of truth," said Pindar, who lived more than five hundred years before Christ.

In all ages men have despised liars, but it is only in the light of the Scriptures that we gain the true motive for being truthful. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight." In his farewell address to the American people George Washington brings out this thought very clearly. "Where," he asks, "is the security for property, for reputation, for life itself, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail without religion."

"You will never habitually speak the truth if you aim only to speak it," it has been well said; "you must aim to live it. You must aim at being the truth. Truth must be the genius of your life. The habit of speaking the truth implies the whole cast of life." Only that one can live the truth who is a sincere follower of Him Whose whole life was truth, to Whom uprightness was the very life of His life.

Speaking the Truth in Love. While the truth is always to be spoken, if anything is said, it is not always necessary to say anything. We may feel very keenly about certain matters, and be thoroughly convinced that our view is the right one, and yet have regard to timeliness and the feelings of others in the expression of our opinions. It may not be cowardice at all, but simply the self-restraint which comes from a wise judgment of opportunities and conditions, or a regard for others, that seals our lips. In household life one has frequent occasion to act on this principle. The inopportune declaration of what you think or know, may alienate the closest friends and sow discords never to be uprooted. It is no defense whatever to say that you spoke what you thought, or that what you said was true. Neither the law of frankness or veracity puts you under any obligation to hurt others' feelings. Paul declares that we are to "speak the truth in love." By heeding the qualification, "in love," we shall be saved from a multitude of errors. Speaking the truth to put others in the wrong and exult over them, to magnify ourselves, to make others despicable

or ridiculous, what a chasm there is between those things and "speaking the truth in love"! *The Watchman.*

III God sees not as Man sees

Judgments passed upon Bible Characters. Again and again, in reading the chronicles of the Hebrew kings, we meet with this summary of the life and reign of men in whom we can see many faults and sins: "He walked before the Lord with a perfect heart." And even when so much can not be said of them with any show of reason, even when they had fallen into open and heinous crimes, we often meet with this gracious, though qualified sentence upon them: "He walked before the Lord, but not with a perfect heart, as did his father David." Nor does this kindly allowance for the faults and infirmities of men spring from moral weakness and indecision. The Bible is not incapable of branding men as open and notorious sinners when they deserve it; for, again and again, it takes leave of them with a sentence which has always seemed to me one of the most terrible in the Old Testament: "He walked in the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin."

We may be sure, then, that when the Bible accords the praise of righteousness to any man, there was "a righteous soul" in him, however it may have been obscured, a soul leaning decisively, if not energetically, toward righteousness; we may be sure that there was a "soul of goodness" in him, would we "observingly distill it out," though it may need to be distilled, to be cleared from much scum and filth which has blended with it and marred its quality. And we may be equally sure that God who judged the men of past ages so generously, looking on them with larger kinder eyes than ours, will make "large allowance for us all." If the righteous soul be in us, although it be much cumbered and concealed by many infirmities, many faults, many sins, He will both recognize it and seek to confirm it in the love and pursuit of righteousness. *Samuel Cox,* in *The Expositor.*

In men whom men condemn as ill,
I find so much of goodness still;
In men whom men pronounce divine,
I see so much of sin and blot—
I hesitate to draw a line
Between the two, where God has not. *Joaquin Miller.*

God sees Hearts as we see Faces. You remember that when George William Curtis looked through Mr. Tidbottom's spectacles he saw the real man—one was but a ledger, another was but a billiard cue. Without such spectacles we can judge others only very imperfectly. Human nature is too complex, motives and deeds are too often at variance, the evil from the good can not be discerned by human eyes. We see that Esau was generous and impulsive while Jacob was tricky and untruthful—how can we disapprove of Esau and approve of Jacob? As we follow the story of their lives we get a glimpse of God's judgment of them; the tendency of Esau with all his good qualities, was downward, while the tendency of Jacob, with all his bad qualities, was upward.

An editorial in the *Sunday School Times* points out the difficulty in the way of our correct judgment. "Two men are moving in the direction of their several choices One has started from a low plane, and is slowly moving God-

ward. The other has left the high plane, and with his face set downward is moving with constantly increasing velocity. Just now the one slowly rising to a loftier height seems to the eye of man not so high up in the scale of being as the other who is simply going down the peaceful decline. But God judges each by his choice and ultimate endeavor. Not what we yet are, but what we would become, is our true measure in God's sight."

An Instructive Fable. Once a child who thought well of herself was walking along the street, and saw another child, who was poorly clad.

"How wretched it must be," she said to herself, "to be poor and shabby like that child! How thin she is! And how her patched cloak flutters in the wind; so different from my velvet dress and cloak!"

Just then an angel came along.

"What are you looking at?" asked the angel.

"I was looking at that girl," said the child.

"So was I," said the angel. "How beautifully she is dressed!"

"What do you mean?" said the child. "I mean this one coming toward us. She is in rags, or at least, if her clothes are not ragged, they are wretchedly thin and shabby."

"Oh, no," said the angel. "How can you say so? She is in sparkling white, as clear as frost. I never saw anything so pretty. But you, you poor little thing, you are indeed miserably clad. Does not the wind blow through and through those flimsy tatters? But at least you could keep them clean, my dear, and mended. You should see to that."

"I don't know what you can mean!" said the child. "That girl is a ragged beggar, and my father is the richest man in town. I have a white dress and coat, trimmed with expensive fur. What are you talking about?"

"About the clothes of your soul, of course!" said the angel, who was young.

"I don't know anything about souls," said the child.

"I shouldn't think you did!" said the angel. *Laura E. Richards.*

Measurement.

"What hast thou wrought?" is the world's demand,
"What is thy product, of brain or hand?"
That presented, the wise world says,
"Take this place!" and the man obeys.

Somewhat otherwise measures God—
Searches the soul with love's testing-rod;
Gets its innermost depth and plan;
Ignores the product, exalts the man.

James Buckham, in *A Wayside Altar.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Thou art like the spirit which thou comprehendest. *Goethe.*

Jacob, of all the patriarchs perhaps, was most like ourselves. *A. B. Davidson.*

The fact of human pervertibility is an awful fact and mystery. *F. W. Robertson.*

Evil counsel is swift in its march. *Plutarch.*

If our faults were written on our foreheads we should have to go with our hats pulled over our eyes. *Spanish Proverb.*

Our fellow-creatures can only judge of what we are from what we do; but

in the eye of our Maker what we do is of no worth except as it flows from what we are. *S. T. Coleridge.*

The devil knew what he did when he made men politic. *Shakespeare.*

No pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth *Bacon.*

In morals, as in geometry, a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. *Barrow.*

A diamond with a flaw is better than a pebble without it; but the flaw adds nothing to the value of the diamond. *Commercial Proverb.*

What a man gains by uttering falsehood is not to be believed when he tells the truth. *Aristotle.*

A mixture of falsehood is like alloy in gold and silver, which may make the metal work, but embaseth it. *Bacon.*

As you shrink from a lie in your speech and in your character, do not accustom yourselves to meditate on shams, fictions, and current errors; rather bring before your mind "whatsoever things are true." *George C. Lorimer.*

The accurate observer of human life, in witnessing the follies of others, will thence derive to himself so many lessons of caution and correctness. *Terrence.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8.32.

The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him. Hosea 12.2.

Buy the truth and sell it not. Prov. 23.23.

The lips of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment. Prov. 12.19.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. Eph. 4.25.

Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever. Psa. 119.160.

Remove from me the way of lying: . . . I have chosen the way of truth. Psa. 119.29, 30.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

If we desire to live a life of truth and honesty, to make our word as strong as our bond, let us not expect to keep ourselves along the narrow line of truth under the constant lash of the whip of duty. Let us begin to love the truth, to fill our minds and life with the strong, white light of sincerity and sterling honesty. Let us love the truth so strongly that there will develop within us without our conscious effort, an ever-present horror of a lie. *W. G. Jordan.*

THE LESSON STORY

Isaac is old and his eyesight is dim, and he fears that death may be near at hand. He directs his favorite son Esau to go out and hunt for game and then to prepare for him the savory meat, for he will partake with Esau of the pledge-giving meal and then, by giving him his blessing, make him chief in the household and also the inheritor of God's special promise to Abraham. Rebekah

overhears the order and quickly forms her plans to secure the blessing for her favorite son Jacob. She tells Jacob that he must pretend to be Esau and carry out Isaac's directions, and for the savory meat she will need two kids. Jacob does not scruple at the deception, but he is cautious; his father, he fears, will detect him by his smooth hands and face, so different from that of his hairy brother. Leave that to me, I will take the risk, only do as I bid you, is Rebekah's answer. She prepares the meat, brings out a suit of Esau's for Jacob to wear, covers his hands and neck with skins of the kids slain, and sends him to Isaac.

From this acted deception Jacob is obliged to lie in words, saying that he is Esau, and then impiously to claim God's help in securing the game so quickly. "Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!" The ruse is successful, Jacob obtains the coveted blessing, and makes his escape before Esau returns from the hunt.

When Esau, too, brings his father the savory meat he prepares, they both learn what Jacob has done. Isaac "trembles exceedingly," for he sees in it the hand of God and bows submissively to His will; "I have blessed him; yea, and he shall be blessed," he says. Esau sees only his brother's knavery, and we sympathize with him in the pathetic cry, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" Esau in his anger openly declares that he will kill Jacob after their father's death, and Rebekah counsels Jacob to escape to her kindred in Haran till his brother's anger cools. He is to remain away "a few days," she says, but those few days lengthen to years, and she is destined never to see him again.

It is not till the end of their careers is reached that we can rightly estimate these two brothers. Esau with all his frankness and generosity has yet no depth of character, he lives only for the moment, he cares little for the birthright and less for the covenant with God, and in later years he becomes a roving chief, living by war and plunder. Jacob with all his meanness is on the right pathway, he earnestly covets what is of the highest worth, and in the end his nobler qualities triumph and he becomes Israel, a prince with God.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Be truthful; this holds unconditionally; but speak the truth does not hold unconditionally. *Friedrich Paulsen.*

2. The system under which we at present live fosters dishonesty and lying. *Herbert Spencer.*

3. As citizens, men despise the birthright. *Benson.*

4. We are to judge conduct by the standards of their day: we are to judge character by the standpoint for all time. *Leonard Bacon.*

5. Does the end justify the means?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What words of Isaiah formed the subject of our last temperance lesson? (Isa. 6.11–23.) 2. What did the law prohibit to priests in Lev. 10.9? See also Ezek. 44.21. 3. Compare the charge made by Micah against the prophets in Mic. 3.5–7. 4. With verse 10 compare a parallel passage in Heb. 5.12–14. 5. With Isaiah's words to the people who paid no heed to his repeated warnings compare Christ's parable in Matt. 21.33–44.

WOES OF DRUNKENNESS

Isaiah 28.7–13. Commit verse 7.

Golden Text

Wine and new wine take away the heart. Hosea 4.11.

LESSON TEXT Isaiah 28.7–13

7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit *and* filthiness, *so that there is no* place *clean.*

9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk *and* drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept *must* be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:

11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

13 But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line: here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

7. R. V., *And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up with wine, they stagger with strong drink. They also.* In the first six verses of the chapter Isaiah has been denouncing "the drunkards of Ephraim" and announcing the speedy fall of their beautiful city of Samaria, and now in the second part of his address he turns to Judah and declares that the Judeans, and especially the rulers of Judah, are not less overcome with wine than the Ephraimites. *They err in vision, they stumble in judgment.* The lower order of prophets are intoxicated even in their prophetic visions, and the priests even while exercising their judicial functions.

9–13. Isaiah has evidently surprised the drunken revellers at their feast, and these verses are a dialogue between him and them.

9. The speakers are "ye scornful men," verse 14. *Doctrine.* R. V., *message.* The message he as prophet has received from the Lord. They insolently mock Isaiah. Are they little children to whom he must bring knowledge?

10. The monosyllabic forms in the Hebrew are said to represent the stammering of a drunkard. *Whom shall he teach knowledge?* Compare Heb. 5.12–14.

11. R. V., *Nay, but by men of strange lips and with another tongue will he speak.* Isaiah makes use of their own sarcasm. He tells them that the Lord will speak to them by a foreign and hostile people (the Assyrians),

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ISAIAH—*Sargent*

whose utterances will be to them as stammering, and strange jargon. *Lange.*

12. *This is the rest.* See Isa. 30.15; Jer. 6.16.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

10. *Precept . . . line . . . here a little, and there a little.* The Hebrew word translated *precept* signifies a little precept, such as is suited to the capacity of a little child. The *line* is the line which a mason stretches out to build a layer of stones by. (Compare 2 Kings 21.13.) After one layer or course is placed, he raises the line and builds another; thus the building is by degrees regularly completed. This is the method of teaching children, giving them such information as their narrow capacities can receive; and thus the prophet dealt with the Israelites. *Adam Clarke.*

11–13. The prophet takes the "for" out of their mouths, and carries it on in his own way. It was quite right that their ungodliness should show itself in such a way as this, for it would meet with an appropriate punishment. Jehovah would speak to the scoffing people of stammering tongue a language of the same kind, since He would speak to them by a people who stammered, *i. e.* who talked as barbarians. This people would practically interpret the will of Jehovah in its own *patois* through His prophets, after the judgments which they had experienced with sufficient severity (1.5ff) into the true way to rest and refreshing (Jer. 6.16) and had exhorted them to give rest to the nation, which had suffered so much under Ahaz through the calamities of war (2 Chron. 28), and not to drag it into another war by goading it on to rise against Assyria by purchasing the help of Egypt. But they would not harken (30.15, 16). Their policy was a very different one from being still, or believing and waiting. And, therefore, the word of Jehovah, which they regarded as an endless series of trivial commands, would be turned in their case into an endless series of painful sufferings. To those who thought themselves so free, and lived so free, it would become a stone on which they would go to pieces, a net in which they would be snared, a trap in which they would be caught. Compare 8.14, 15. *Delitzsch.*

12. *They.* Pleasure-loving people forgot God, His counsels, His work. Their love of drink and dissipation blinds their eyes, dulls their ears, so that they have no quiet moments to recollect their Maker. These verses are exactly true nowadays of many. They never have time to reflect, they enslave themselves to drink and a passion for amusement, till duty, charity, compassion, divine truth, have all faded out of their minds. *Edward King.*

12. *The weary.* The ordinary plebeian, who had everything to lose and nothing to gain, by the chances of war. Isaiah had sought to point out the true way of rest for the exhausted nation by abstinence from the spirited foreign policy advocated by the anti-Assyrian faction. Two translations, however, are possible. Either: "And this (Jerusalem) is the resting-place; give rest to the weary; and this is the place of refreshment;" or: "This (line of action) is the (true) rest, and this is the (true) refreshment." The latter seems preferable. *Skinner.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. About sixty years ago a little girl was living in

the backwoods of Wisconsin, roaming the woods, and climbing trees. There was one particular seat in a tree which she called the "Eagle's Nest," and there she wrote stories and rhymes and hid them away where no one could find them. Sometimes she would wish she knew more about what was going on in the great world, often she would say to her brother and sister,—"Do you suppose we shall ever go anywhere or be anybody or see anything?"

When she was eighteen years of age, her family moved to Evanston, Illinois, that she and her sister might go to college there. At thirty she had "become somebody," for she was then made dean of that college. But this place of honor she gave up to spend her time and strength for the temperance cause. For over twenty years she traveled throughout the United States and in foreign lands, lecturing and writing on temperance, and it was said that with the exception of Queen Victoria, she was the best known and best loved woman in the world. In the Hall of Statuary in the Capitol at Washington each state may place statues of two of its most famous citizens, and after the death of Frances Willard, the little girl who wondered if she "would ever go anywhere, be anybody, or see anything," the State of Illinois voted to place her statue there.

Miss Willard felt that it was very important that the evils of intemperance should be understood by the children, that it should be taught them in precept upon precept, line upon line, and it was through her influence several years ago that the International Sunday School Lesson Committee, the committee which selects the lessons which we study each week, was led to give each year four lessons upon the subject of temperance.

Our first temperance lesson this year is from the prophet Isaiah, who lived long after the time of the patriarchs.

For Older Pupils. Of all the indictments brought by moralists against nations, that which they reserve for drunkenness is, as here, the most heavily weighted. In ancient times there was scarcely a state in which prohibitive legislation of the most stringent kind was not attempted, and generally carried out with a thoroughness more possible under despots than where, as with us, the slow consent of public opinion is necessary. A horror of strong drink has in every age possessed those who from their position as magistrates or prophets have been able to follow for any distance the drift of social life. . . . Temperance reformers are often blamed for the strength of their language, but they may shelter themselves behind Isaiah. As he pictures it, the natural destruction caused by drink is complete. It is nothing less than the people's captivity, and we know what that meant to an Israelite. *George Adam Smith.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Slavery of Drink

Wine and New Wine take away the Heart. Isaiah prophesies for the people of his generation who are given to excessive drinking that captivity in Assyria will be their fate. There is no need of proving that in our own day and generation those who are slaves to drink are under a worse bondage than Assyrian captivity.

More than five centuries before Isaiah's time Homer described the ruin wrought by wine in the following dialogue between the hero Hector and his mother.

Stay till I bring the cup with Bacchus crowned,
Then with a plenteous draught refresh thy soul
And draw new spirits from the generous bowl."
"Far hence be Bacchus gifts!" Hector rejoined.
"Inflaming wine, pernicious to mankind,
Unnerves the limbs and dulls the noble mind:
Let chiefs abstain, and spare the sacred juice
To sprinkle to the gods—'tis fitter use."

How a Defeat was Averted. In the Burmese war, on one occasion, the enemy made a surprise attack at the British camp. It was a moment of immense peril, for, as everything seemed to be quiet, multitudes of the soldiers were drunk. Sir Henry Havelock, however, then a young officer, was an abstainer and a religious man. He used to gather his soldiers together in a Bible class — a thing in those days almost unheard of. A despairing message about the expected attack and the state in which most of the soldiers were, was brought to the general in command. His reply was: "Send to Havelock; his men are never drunk, and he is always ready." And Havelock's sober soldiers repelled the assault, and saved the army from defeat and the nation from catastrophe. *F. W. Farrar.*

Good Advice to Young Men. A young man could hardly do a more fatal thing than to fall into the habit of taking stimulants. The belief sometimes entertained that it is necessary to drink in order to impress your sociability on companions who also drink, is utterly erroneous. One day a dinner was given by one of the great lawyers of this country in honor of another lawyer of distinction, and among those present was a young man of great promise. The dinner began with a cocktail, and the young man was the only one of the company who did not drink it. Nor did he take any wine throughout the dinner. The incident was noticed by only a few, and those few chanced to meet at a club the next day. The young man was the topic of their conversation. "Well," said the great lawyer, "a young man who has enough self-restraint to deny himself as that young man did has in him simply tremendous possibilities. I have not been so impressed in a long time as I was by his refraining from drinking." This incident is related simply to show that a young man loses nothing in the esteem of those who themselves drink by declining to join them.

It is so entirely uncertain whether you have the will in you to keep your hands very firmly on the reins of the wild horses of habit. It is so utterly unknown to you whether you may not have inherited from an ancestor, even very remote, an inflammable blood which, once touched by stimulant, is ever after on fire. You risk too much, and you risk it needlessly. My earnest advice is not to try it. I will leave to the doctors the universal testimony to the peculiar blurring of judgment which stimulant of any kind usually produces. Besides, it is a very bad thing for a young man to get a reputation for. *A J. Beveridge.*

King or Slave? At each moment of man's life he is like a king or a slave. As he surrenders to a wrong appetite, to any human weakness; as he falls prostrate in hopeless subjection to any condition, to any environment, to any failure, he is a slave. As he day by day crushes out human weakness, masters opposing elements within him, and day by day re-creates a new self from the sin and folly of the past,— then he is a king, he is a king ruling with wisdom over self. *William George Jordan.*

II Precept upon Precept

It is the Third Time that Tells. A young American who was studying music in Italy, expected at the end of the year that his teacher would advance him to some new branches, but was surprised to find that he was to go over the same curriculum. This was repeated for three consecutive years, for there is nothing like drill. At the end of that time he graduated as a master-musician. That is the way Christ teaches. It is the same lesson over and over again until we have mastered it, and then we are ready to graduate into glory. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

One day Charlie came to Arthur's room to study their Latin lesson before playtime. The two boys went over the lesson once and smoothed out most of the difficulties, then Charlie rose to get his cap.

"Where are you going?" Arthur asked.

"Why, out to the campus," said Charlie in surprise. "Come on!"

"Not before this lesson is done!"

"I thought we'd got it," said Charlie.

"Must go over it again," said Arthur, turning to his books.

Charlie finally sat down with him, and the lesson was reviewed with grammar and notes; the points before looked up were carefully learned. "I don't wonder you always get 'A,' if this is how you drudge," said Charlie, again starting.

"Hold on, Charlie," said Arthur, laughing. "We must read it a third time. Once to find out the points; once to learn all we have found out; and once to make sure. It is the third time that tells."

Charlie for once learned how winners work. *Young People's Weekly.*

The Need of Repetitions. In planting corn the proverb is, one grain for the crow, one grain for the worm, and one grain for the stalk. And in teaching a child the principle is drilled into memory once, to be forgotten; a second time, to be neglected; a third time, to be obeyed and transmuted into conduct and character. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Unheeded Warnings. Judas did not rush blindly to his fate. For two years, at least, he lived with Jesus, and Jesus, seeing his peril, sounded again and again a warning note. Yet Judas failed to heed the repeated warnings, but harbored his evil thoughts till they led him on to his dastardly deed. It is not for lack of warning, precept upon precept and line upon line, that evil deeds are committed now. Seldom is a sinner ignorant of the result of sin, he sins against repeated warnings.

Last year there was a sudden landslide in the village of Haverstraw on the Hudson, many houses were hurled into a clay pit which is underlaid with quicksand, and many lives were lost. The pit had been dug out by brickmakers, and it was seen that the houses on the bluff above were being undermined. Several times the owners were warned that they must move. On the day the catastrophe occurred, the chief of police noticed a wide crack in the street, and he went to each house and warned the inmates to leave at once. "Oh, I guess the bank will hold a while longer," they told him; they had become accustomed to the threatened danger, and they did not leave.

Even after some houses had collapsed, and the families of adjoining houses had reached a place of safety, the people rushed back into houses already tottering on their foundations in order to save some of their property and thus miserably perished.

The people who perished in the flood were repeatedly warned by Noah's words

and example, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah did not go to their doom without many warnings; those the world over who fail to inherit eternal life will be those who have failed to heed the warnings given them.

III Falling Backward

There must be Going forward or there will be Falling backward. "If I cease becoming better," said Cromwell, "I shall soon cease being good." This is an appalling statement, but a little thought proves its truthfulness. We can not bury our talents and keep them. "Take from him the talent." In spiritual as well as in physical life there must be renewal and progress or there will be degeneracy and decay. The word of the Lord must be obeyed, the warning given precept upon precept and line upon line must be heeded, or it will result in one's falling backward and being broken and snared and taken.

Dry Rot in Character. We do our utmost to protect great buildings from fire and tempest, and yet all the time those buildings are liable to another peril not less severe — the subtle decay of the very frame-work of the structure itself. The tissue of the wood silently and mysteriously deteriorates, and calamity as dire as a conflagration is precipitated. The whole of the magnificent roofing of the Church of St. Paul in Rome had to be taken out at enormous expense because of the dry rot. Scientific men by miscroscopic and chemical methods have investigated the causes of this premature decay, and after patient search they have discovered, not only the fungi which destroy the wood tissue, but also the spore that acts as the seed of the fungus. So this obscure, malign vegetation goes on in the heart of the wood, destroying the glory and strength of minster and palace.

Character is liable to a similar danger. Some evils do not come from the outside. Some of the worst possibilities of loss, weakness, and ruin emerge from within; the destroying agents work obscurely and stealthily, and are almost unsuspected until they have wrought fatal mischief. The scientists expect soon to provide a means of destroying this seed before it produces growth. Christians need to destroy the seed of dry rot in character. Atmosphere is a preventive of dry rot, and it is an essential thing that the breath of Heaven should have free course through our nature. Sunshine is a fine antidote to dry rot. The sense of God's favor must be an abiding consciousness with us. The builder must watch against unhealthful conditions, and saturate joists and sleepers with the necessary chemical solutions. So must we keep ourselves from whatever would infect, and evermore steep our moral faculties and life in the antiseptic influences of truth and grace. *W. L. Watkinson.*

Return forbidden. In certain mountain passes of Austria are found signboards bearing, in German, the words, "Return forbidden." These roads are so narrow and precipitous that there is not room for two carriages abreast; therefore, to attempt to retrace one's path might bring disaster upon one's self and upon those coming after. Once having started there, you must keep straight on until you have reached your destination. To-day's pressing duties call us forward, not backward. There are others coming after; we must push ahead for their sakes and for our own. Austria is not the only place where there is need of the warning, "Return forbidden." *C. G. Trumbull.*

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outworn shell by life's unresting sea.

O. W. Holmes.

SENTENCE SERMONS

All that is human must retrograde if it do not advance. *Gibbon.*

In the temperance revolution we shall find a stronger bondage (than slavery) broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed. *Lincoln.*

Many Christians are like the Leaning Tower of Pisa — as far gone from uprightness as it is possible to go without toppling over. *Sunday School Times.*

According to the law of mental life, one must either grow in power or lose power, for there is no middle course. *Charles W. Mann.*

They fall deepest into hell who fall backward into hell: none so near Heaven as those who are convinced of sin; none so near hell as those who have quenched conviction. *Bunyan.*

The habit that society has of treating drunkenness as a comic incident has something to do with the drunkard's own attitude toward it. *A Reformed Drunkard.*

O what a generation that will be to which strong drink will be unknown; how healthy, how wealthy, how clear of intellect, how strong of arm, how rich in hope, and how fertile in resources! *F. W. Farrar.*

I have said a hundred times, and I am willing to say it again, that if anybody will take charge of all the poverty and crime which result from drunkenness, the South Congregational Church, of which I have the honor to be the minister, will alone take charge of all the rest of the poverty which needs relief in the city of Boston. *Edward Everett Hale.*

He who successfully combats temptation, compacts and hardens thereby his moral muscles; and with every succeeding triumph his eye flashes fresh brightness, and his firmer tread and nobler bearing proclaim him more the man than ever. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations. Lev. 10.9.

If, when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. Ezek. 33.3, 4.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Matt. 21.42–44.

WOES OF DRUNKENNESS

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Your first duty is toward your after-self. So live that your after-self — the man you ought to be — may in his time be possible and actual. Far away in the twenties, the thirties of the twentieth century, he is awaiting his turn. His body, his brain, his soul, are in your hands. He can not help himself. What will you leave for him? Will it be a brain unspoiled by dissipation, a mind trained to think and act, a nervous system true as a dial in its response to the truth about you? Will you let him come, taking your place, gaining through your experiences, hallowed through your joys, building on them his own, or will you fling his hope away, decreeing wanton-like that the man you might have been shall never be? *David Starr Jordan.*

THE LESSON STORY

Isaiah throws upon the screen a picture as dark as it is forceful. He sketches in deep colors the drunkenness and insolence of priest and prophet at Jerusalem. There was an express command against the taking of wine by the priest when engaged in his duties, yet priest and the lower order of prophets alike were "reeling with strong drink." Isaiah's adversaries themselves come upon the scene, and the setting is a banquet hall where a drunken revelry has been held. The revellers mock Isaiah; they tell him they are not children needing to be taught, they are of age and free, and they are weary of the endless monotony, the stammering jargon of his warnings. "Yes," returns Isaiah, making use of their own scornful utterances, "yes, the words of the Lord shall indeed come from seemingly stammering lips and in a strange jargon, for He shall speak to you through your enemies, the Assyrians. There has been but one remedy for your safety,— your deliverance from the calamities threatening you; but one true 'rest,'— that of implicit faith in the Lord, not passive obedience to Assyria; but you would not heed God's words. And these warnings, so often repeated to you, which heeded would have saved you, shall be to you a stumbling block, and you shall fall backward and be broken and snared and taken."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Some who fall away and the reasons for their backsliding.

2. As long as the masses have not become intellectually convinced that the harm done by the liquor traffic is greater than the good claimed for it, such as the multifarious employment of many, and the constant and large revenue it returns, so long will any attempt to enforce prohibition fail, and in their failure promote the traffic. *Axel Gustafson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Prepare a list of all the lessons studied, their golden texts, and the thought emphasized in class with each lesson.

2. Bring to class twenty-four questions, two for each lesson of the quarter. (Let the questions be put into a box Review Sunday and then drawn one at a time by the scholars in turn and answered.)

3. (Assign for study whatever work will be taken up in class.)

REVIEW

Read Psalm CIV

Golden Text for the Quarter

The Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. 2.19.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE FIRST TWENTY-SEVEN CHAPTERS OF GENESIS

Lesson I. In the beginning God created the universe. The first day He created light, and separated it from darkness; the second day He made the firmament; the third, He caused the earth to appear above the water and created vegetable life; the fourth, He fashioned the sun and moon and stars; the fifth, the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air; the sixth, the beasts of the earth and man.

Lesson II. God created man in His own image — giving him mental and spiritual powers which may be likened to His. He appointed man to rule over the lower animals and to enjoy the products of the earth. Everything that God had made was good, adapted to its purpose. God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made, and He sanctified that day above other days as one of peace and rest.

God created a helpmeet for man. He placed Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, in the Garden of Eden and gave them permission to eat the fruit of all the trees there save one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Lesson III. The serpent tempted Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. "Has God forbidden you to eat the fruit?" he questioned her. "We may eat all fruit save that of the tree in the midst of the Garden; if we eat that we shall surely die," answered Eve. "You will not die," returned the serpent; "God has forbidden you to eat it only because then your eyes will be opened and you will be like Him." Eve looked longingly at the fruit and yielded to the temptation. Then she gave it to Adam, and he ate also. For this disobedience God punished them, and sent them away from Paradise. All sin is wilful disobedience of God's laws, and all sin will be punished. But the promise was given of the world's Redeemer who should set free men from their sins.

To Adam and Eve two sons were born named Cain and Abel. Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain a tiller of the ground.

Lesson IV. Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God. Abel's offering of a lamb was accepted, for he presented it in the right spirit, but Cain's offering of the produce of the field was not accepted, for his spirit was evil. God rebuked Cain, and later in his jealous rage Cain killed Abel. "Where is Abel thy brother?" God questioned Cain as he fled from the spot of the murder. Cain answered that he did not know, and added, "Am I my brother's keeper?" God

punished Cain by compelling him to flee as a fugitive to the land of Nod, where he could gain but little by cultivating the soil, but He gave him a sign of protection from his enemies.

In the course of time the wickedness of mankind became so great that it threatened to prevail wholly; God determined to send a flood to the earth and destroy its people. The one righteous family of Noah God would save. He therefore directed Noah to build an ark which should ride upon the waters and not be destroyed. The ark was built, Noah and his family and the animals he was directed to save entered it, and the flood began. The flood raged till every living thing was destroyed.

Lesson V. God caused the flood to cease and a wind gradually to dry up the waters. In the seventh month the ark rested on a mountain. After waiting a long time, Noah sent a raven from the ark, and it did not return. He sent forth a dove which could find no place to rest and came back to the ark. When sent forth a week later the dove returned with an olive leaf, and Noah thus learned that the waters were greatly abated. He took off the covering of the ark, and seeing that the land was dry he left his place of refuge. His first act was to build an altar and offer sacrifice to God.

The building of the Tower of Babel, designed to "reach into Heaven," was interrupted by God's multiplying the languages spoken by its builders. As they could no longer understand one another's speech, they separated, going in different directions to establish their homes.

One of the descendants of Noah was Terah, and his son was Abraham.

Lesson VI. God directed Abram to leave his country and kindred and father's house and go to a land that He promised to show him, and He would make of him a great nation and would bless him and make him a blessing. Abram at once obeyed the call of God and went to Canaan. He halted under an oak in the district of Shechem, and here God made known to him that this was the land destined for him and his posterity. Abram erected an altar there in gratitude to God. At Bethel he tarried again and built there an altar also.

Abram continued his journey southward as far as Egypt because there was a famine in Canaan.

Lesson VII. Abram returned to the neighborhood of Bethel with his nephew Lot and their great herds and flocks. Disputes arose between their herdsmen over the pasturage. Abram settled the trouble by deciding that they must separate. From a lofty hill they looked over a wide stretch of territory, and, acting on Abram's generous proposal that he should have the first choice, Lot chose what he thought by far the best of the surrounding territory, the rich fertile land east of the Jordan. There were wicked cities there, Sodom and Gomorrah, but this fact did not trouble Lot.

After Lot's departure God's word came to Abram that to him and his descendants all the land he could see would be given.

A powerful king named Chedorlaomer waged warfare against Sodom and Gomorrah, killed their kings, and carried off Lot with the rest of the people. As soon as Abram heard of this with a small troup he overtook the victors, overcame them, and brought back Lot and the captured spoil.

Lesson VIII. "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding

great reward," was the word of the Lord that came to Abram in a vision. "Look at the stars above, they can not be counted, neither can thy descendants." Abram was in the habit of trusting God, and he believed Him now. God reminded him that He had brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, his first home, to give him the land about him for an inheritance. In preparation for the sealing of the covenant according to the custom of his time, Abram divided a heifer, a goat, and a ram and arranged the parts in two heaps. All day he drove off the birds of prey which hovered near. At sunset he fell asleep, and in a vision saw his descendants as slaves of foreign masters but rescued after a period of four hundred years. Fire, the symbol of God's presence, passed between the two heaps and thus the promise, or covenant, between God and Abram was sealed.

God renewed His covenant with Abram and changed his name to Abraham, a word meaning "Father of a great multitude."

Abraham married a second wife named Hagar. Her son Ishmael was destined to become "a wild man," as a messenger of God told her.

Lesson IX. Three strangers came to Abraham's tent, and after they had been hospitably entertained by Abraham they told him that his wife Sarah should have a son. When they started to leave Abraham accompanied them, and on their way one of his strange visitors told him that God was about to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the wickedness of the people. Abraham plead with his divine visitor to spare Sodom if there were fifty good men in the city. Then he asked whether the city might not be spared for the sake of forty good men, then of thirty, of twenty, or even of ten, and each time the answer was "Yes."

There were not ten good men in Sodom, and the cities were destroyed, but for Abraham's sake Lot and his family were first permitted to leave the city, though Lot's wife became "a pillar of salt" because she disobeyed the order not to look back.

Isaac, Abraham's long promised heir, was born, and Hagar and Ishmael were sent away at Sarah's demand. Abraham's faith in God was tested by being called on to offer Isaac in sacrifice, but as he was about to slay him an angel stayed his hand. Sarah died and Abraham bought the field of Machpelah and buried her in a cave there. Abraham would not have Isaac marry a Canaanitish wife, and therefore sent his trusted servant Eliezer to his kindred in Mesopotamia to secure a wife there for his son. Rebekah was chosen, and she came back with Eliezer to marry Isaac.

Twins were born to Isaac and Rebekah; Isaac loved Esau the more, but Rebekah's favorite was Jacob. Abraham died in a good old age, and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah. When Isaac's sons were grown Esau returned from the hunt one day almost famished, and seeing Jacob with a dish of lentil pottage he agreed to give him his birthright, or place as elder son, in exchange for the food to satisfy his momentary hunger.

Lesson X. Isaac moved to Gerar. His farming prospered and he was very rich in servants and flocks and herds. The Philistines envied him, and wishing to drive him away they stopped up the wells which Abraham had dug there. Isaac could not care for his herds without water, and he would not fight with the Philistines, so he quietly moved onward. He opened up other wells

which his enemies had filled with earth, and dug also a new well, but the native herdsmen contended that the water was theirs. He dug yet another well, and for this his enemies strove. Leaving this well to them also, he dug a third one, and this he was allowed to enjoy in peace.

Isaac journeyed on to Beersheba where the covenant made to Abraham was renewed to him. He built an altar there and worshiped God. His servants dug a well. Abimelech, the king of Gerar, came to make with him a treaty of peace.

Lesson XI. When Isaac was old and nearly blind he feared he might not live long, and therefore wished to give his formal blessing to Esau and thus make him the heir of God's promises to him. He bade Esau prepare some venison for the occasion of the ceremony. While Esau was off hunting Rebekah carried out her plan to deceive Isaac and secure the blessing for Jacob. She covered Jacob's hands and neck with goat skin that they might feel hairy to Isaac like Esau's, and sent him to his father with a savory stew. Isaac blessed him, thinking he was Esau. When Esau returned and brought the venison to his father, they discovered the deception. The solemn blessing could not be recalled, but Isaac promised Esau much worldly prosperity. Rebekah learned that Esau had threatened to kill his brother, and in order to save Jacob's life she induced Isaac to send him away to her family in search of a wife.

A BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Titles	Outlines	Lessons
1. God the Creator.	Converted chaos. Created the universe. Caused it to be inhabited.	God is the Great cause of the Goodness of things.
2. Man made in the Image of God.	Man God's image. Made to rule. Must keep the Sabbath.	Man must Make his life worthy of his Maker.
3. Man's Sin and God's Promise.	Serpent tempted. Sinful disobedience. Sin punished. Saviour promised.	Temptations come to test us. We must triumph over the tempter.
4. The Story of Cain and Abel.	Acceptable sacrifice. Awful crime. Angry Judge. Amazing mercy.	We are warned that we must work for our brother's welfare.
5. Noah Saved in the Ark.	Flood ceased. Food for raven. Flight of dove. Family saved.	Sin brings the sinner punishment. Safety of the righteous secured them by God.

6. Abram called to be a blessing.	God's call. reat faith. rand promise. ratitude shown.	Be careful to ear in mind your duty of eing a lessing to others.
7. Lot's Choice.	Disputes arose. isinterestedness of Abraham. ecision of Lot.	Let us think ittle of ourselves but ovingly of others.
8. God's Covenant with Abram.	Comforting words. ourageous faith. ovenant ratified.	Fear not is the riendly message to the riends of God.
9. Abraham pleading for Sodom.	Promise renewed. unishment deserved. leading of Abram. rayers granted.	One should never mit prayers for thers as well as for nesélf.
10. Isaac a Lover of Peace.	Philistines envious. rovoked hostility. atience rewarded.	It is better to ncur trouble than to ncrease strife.
11. Jacob and Esau.	Coveted blessing. rafty deceit. rime threatened.	Lies of all sorts are a- ike evil in the sight of the ord our God.
12. Woes of Drunkenness.	Strong drink. tammering tongues. coffing people. ensible repetitions.	Shun wine and trong drink if you eek health and uccess.

AN OUTLINE OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS

I. The beginning of mankind.
   1. In the beginning.
   2. The first man.
   3. The first sin.
   4. The first murder.
   5. The progress of sin and its punishment.

II. The beginnings of God's chosen people.
   6. The call of Abraham.
   7. The sin of worldliness.
   8. The virtue of faith.
   9. The value of prayer.
   10. The lesson in peacefulness.
   11. The evil of deceit; the virtue of right valuations.
   12. The evil of drunkenness.

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

1. *The Creation.* Who was in the beginning? What was the work of the first day? Of the second? Of the third? Of the fourth? Of the fifth? Of the sixth? How was the seventh day "blessed?"

2. *The Fall.* Who were the first man and woman? Where was their home? Why were they driven out? What promise was given?

3. *The First Murder.* Who were the sons of Adam and Eve? What was the employment of each? What sacrifice did each offer? Which offering was not acceptable to God and why? What sin was committed? What was the punishment? Where did Cain go?

4. *The Deluge.* What was the reason for the Deluge? Who alone was righteous? What directions did he receive? How did he show his faith? Who and what entered the ark? What were the names of Noah's sons? How long did the flood last? Where did the ark at last rest? How did Noah learn that the ground in the valleys was dry? What did he do on leaving the ark? What did God promise?

5. *Abraham.* Who was Abraham's father? Where was Abraham's native home? What sacrifice was he called to make? Where did God first appear to him in Canaan? Why did he go to Bethel? Where did he go from Bethel? Why? Did he ever again leave Canaan? Where did he settle on his return? Who was his nephew? Why did he and Abraham separate? Where did Lot settle? Where did Abraham next go? What battle did he fight and for what purpose? What covenant did God make with him? Who was the son of Abraham and Hagar? What visitors came to see Abraham? What did they tell him? What cities were destroyed and why? Who were saved? Where did Abraham next settle? Why were Hagar and Ishmael sent away after Isaac was born? What great sacrifice did Abraham show himself ready to make? Why did he not make it? Where was Sarah buried? What messenger did Abraham send to Haran? For what purpose? How old was Abraham when he died? Where was he buried?

6. *Isaac.* What danger threatened Isaac as a young man? Who became his wife? How was she brought to him? What were their sons' names? What was the character of each? What foolish bargain did Esau make when he was hungry? What promise was renewed to Isaac? Where did he go because of famine? What trouble did he have there? How did he settle it? What deceit was practised on him in his old age? What did Esau threaten to do because of it? How was this prevented? Where was Isaac buried?

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS

What is the meaning of the word "day" as used in the account of the creation? What did the people worship in Chaldea? How have God's revelations been made? What is the meaning of the expression "God created man in his own image"? What does "God blessed the seventh day" mean? How should Sunday be kept? How far is a man responsible for his character? What is the first promise in the Bible? What is temptation for? What are the lessons of the Fall? What is the meaning of the words, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth from the ground"? Is God vindictive? In what did wealth consist in Abraham's day? How did Abraham travel? What could Abraham and

Lot see from a hill near Bethel? How were covenants ratified? Narrate the circumstances connected with the nine revelations made by God to Abraham. Why is the word *Lord* sometimes written in capitals in the Bible? What was the custom in regard to succession to an inheritance? In what signal instances did Abraham show his faith? What part of the promised inheritance had he acquired at his death? Why was he content? What is the nature of God's justice? In what respects was Esau a better man than Jacob? In what respects was Jacob the better man? Why was Jacob rather than Esau selected to inherit the promise? In what way is the Golden Text for the Quarter applicable to each lesson?

WRITTEN REVIEWS

1. Write the lesson stories in your own language, using not more than seventy-five words for each.
2. Show how one of the following virtues is taught in a lesson, and add your own thoughts about it: faith, forbearance, generosity, obedience, order, peacefulness, patience, perseverance, prayerfulness.
3. Show how one of the following sins is portrayed in a lesson, and add your own thoughts about it: covetousness, disobedience, deceitfulness, drinking, envy, hatred, lying, murder, selfishness, worldliness.
4. Write a life of Noah.
5. Write a life of Abraham.
6. Write a life of Isaac.
7. Write a life of Rebekah.
8. Write an account of the customs of life in the early patriarchal times as brought out by the lessons.

A GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

What was the extent of the Old Testament world? Name its important mountains. Where is Mount Ararat? Where did the ark rest? Locate the three largest rivers. Name the countries on the Mediterranean slope; on the central plain; on the eastern slope. What was the character of the soil of the central plain? What other names were given to Babylonia? How ancient was the Babylonian civilization? Who was the ruler when Abraham was born? How far did his kingdom extend? Where was Eden? Where was Babel? What city was Abraham's early home? How were the monuments and clay tablets preserved? To what city did Abraham go from Ur? Into what kingdom? By what sort of road? Why did he leave Haran? For what purpose did he later send his servant to this city? Why did his grandson come to the same city?

What route did Abraham take from Haran to Canaan? Where was his first recorded stopping place? Between what mountains? Where did he next pitch his tent? Why did he leave Canaan? To what country did he go? To what place did he return? In what other places in Canaan did Abraham live? Where was each located? Where did Lot settle? What places were connected with Isaac's life? Locate each.

What was the extent of Canaan? What are the natural divisions of its surface? Describe the Maritime Plain; the Shephelah; the Central Range; the

Jordan Valley; the Eastern Range. By what nations was Canaan inhabited in Abraham's day?

Draw a map of the Old Testament world and locate and name its mountains, rivers, lakes, and seas.

Draw a map of the Old Testament world and outline and name the countries. Locate the cities connected with Abraham's life. Trace upon it the course of Abraham's journey from Ur to Egypt.

Make a sketch map of Canaan showing the five natural physical divisions.

Make a sketch map of Canaan and locate the places connected with Abraham's life.

A REVIEW FOR THE SCHOOL

Let a chalk artist quickly make a sketch representing a lesson, or have a large picture hung before the school which represents some scene connected with the lesson, and then have the entire school repeat the Title and Golden Text for that lesson. Let some one (who has been appointed in advance and is therefore prepared) follow with a four-minute talk. Carry out this plan for each lesson of the quarter. The "talks" may be a word picture of the lesson, a story enforcing the truth of the lesson, a poem based on the lesson subject, a series of well-chosen questions answered by the school or by some one class, an analysis of the lesson, an application of the lesson truths, or whatever is applicable to the lesson. Great variety may thus be secured, and classes of all grades will be interested.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What led Isaac to charge Jacob not to take a Canaanitish wife? (Gen. 27.46.) 2. What was the land promised to Jacob? (Gen. 17.8.) 3. Read the fourth Psalm, fitly called "The Psalm of the Restless Night," and write in your own words David's thoughts and the scenes that came before him. 4. What words of Jesus to Nathanael are an allusion to this vision of Jacob's? (John 1.51.) 5. Read what David says of God's presence everywhere, in the first ten verses of the 139th Psalm. 6. Look up the references in the Subject-Index of your Bible under God, Omnipresent. 7. On what later occasions were memorial stones set up? (Gen. 31.45; Ex. 24.4; Josh. 4.9, 20; 24.26; 1 Sam. 7.12.) 8. Why was the "setting up any image of stone in your land" prohibited in Lev. 26.1? 9. Look up Gen. 14.20 for the first reference in the Bible to the custom of giving a tithe to God. 10. Read Gen. 35.1–15 and tell how Jacob fulfilled the first part of his promise in verse 22. 11. How did Jesus estimate the rich men's tithes and the poor widow's mites? (Mark 12.42–44.) 12. Read Christ's marvelous intercessory prayer in John 17 in contrast to Jacob's bargaining prayer in verses 20–22.

SECOND QUARTER

LESSON I — APRIL 7

JACOB'S VISION AND GOD'S PROMISE

Gen. 28.1-5, 10-22. (Read Gen. 27.46-28.22.) Commit vv. 13, 14.

Golden Text

Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest. Gen. 28.15.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 28.1–5, 10–22.

1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

2 Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them for* his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I *am* the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew *it* not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven.

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God.

22 And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.* Isaac was led to give Jacob this command and to send him to Laban, by Rebekah's words of 27.46. Rebekah does not tell Isaac the real motive for sending Jacob away.

3, 4. Isaac repeats willingly now the blessing already obtained by treachery, and adds words making Jacob the inheritor of God's promise to Abraham, which he had not ventured to utter when he supposed he was giving his blessing to Esau. *The land wherein thou art a stranger.* R. V., *the land of thy sojournings.*

11. *A certain place.* See verse 19.

13. *Above it.* The margin of the revised version translates this *beside him.*

17. *Dreadful.* In the sense of inspiring awe or reverence. *The gate of heaven.* Onkelos seems to suppose that the gate or entrance into Heaven was actually above this spot, and that when the angels of God descended to earth, they came through that opening into this place, and returned by the same way. And it really appears that Jacob himself had a similar notion. *Clarke.*

18. *A pillar.* The Hebrew word is technical and means a sacred pillar. *Addis. Poured oil upon the top of it.* Oil is the symbol of consecration, and thus Jacob consecrated the stone as a memorial.

19. *Bethel.* R. V. M., *that is, The house of God.* This place Jacob makes a place of worship by erecting an altar. (Gen. 35.7.)

21. *Then shall the Lord God be my God.* R. V., *And (if) Jehovah will be my God, then this stone,* etc.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

11. *The sun was set.*

Though like a wanderer
Daylight all gone,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone:
Yet, in my dreams, I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee. *S. F. Adams.*

11. *The stones of that place.* One of the most singular stone formations west of the Jordan in Palestine is to be seen in the great stone field a little to the north of the modern town of Beitin, the ancient Bethel. . . . Huge stones seem to be piled one upon another to make columns nine or ten feet or more in height. In reality these columns are produced by erosion, and the different density of the strata has led to greater erosion in one part than another, so that they taper and bulge in manifold and various shapes. *John P. Peters.*

The Spirit of God always conveyed His teaching to His servants in language borrowed from their surroundings. John's records of Heaven are full of reminiscence of the Ægean, which sometimes murmured around the cliffs of his prison-isle as a sea of glass bathed in fire, and at other times broke on them in yeasty foam. David's Psalms make constant reference to the wild hill-country of Judea, in which so many of them were composed; Daniel's visions commemorate giant forms familiar to him in Babylon; and Amos casts his prophecies in moulds borrowed from a herdsman's life. *B. F. Meyer.*

12. *The angels of God ascending and descending.* Have you noticed that the

angels in Jacob's vision first ascended and then descended? At first the order seems unnatural. Are they not ever in His presence, harkening unto the voice of His word? But as we look at it we see that this is even the right order for them as for us. They must ascend if they would rightly descend. We must go up to God if we would rightly come down to earth. *Mark Guy Pearse.*

20. *If God will be with me.* This bargaining prayer of Jacob's stands related to real prayer as a specimen brick does to a whole house. *W. H. P. Faunce.*

Many centuries have passed since then, but there are a great many men and women in Christian communities who think that prayer is only a shrewd bargain. Their question is not, How can I serve God? but, How can I get God to serve me? The question is not, How can I do God's will in the world? but, How can I get God to help me accomplish my will in the world? And they do not often, perhaps, make Him as generous a bargain as Jacob; they do not often, perhaps, give a tenth of their income. *Lyman Abbott.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *Go to Padan-aram and take thee a wife.* When a son has attained the age of twenty years, a father, if able, should marry him, and then take his hand and say, "I have disciplined thee, and taught thee, and married thee; I now seek refuge with God from thy mischief in the present world and the next." This Mohammedan tradition expresses with tolerable accuracy the idea of the Eastern world, that the father has not discharged his responsibilities towards his son until he finds a wife for him. *Marcus Dods.*

11. *He lay down in that place to sleep.* It is no unusual thing in Palestine to sleep in the open air. Two-thirds of the present population do so during the summer months — on housetops, in fields, or with their flocks on hillsides. I have often seen a shepherd or muleteer take a stone for a pillow; and it is by no means uncomfortable when the turban is properly folded. *Josiah Porter.*

12. *And he dreamed.* Between the forefeet of the Great Sphinx at Gizeh, Egypt, there is a small sanctuary, three sides of which are formed by memorial stones, huge hieroglyphical tablets, dedicated to the Sphinx under the name of the god Haremakhu, or Harmochis, "The sun on the Horizon." We are told that Thothmes IV, when a prince, lay down in the shade of the colossal form of the Sphinx and fell asleep. To him in a dream the god imaged by the Sphinx appeared and said: "Behold me, look at me, thou, my son Thothmes! I am thy father Harmochis. The kingdom shall be given to thee: thou shalt wear the white crown and the red crown on the throne. The world shall be thine in its length and breadth. . . . The sand of the district has covered me up. Promise me that thou wilt do what I wish in my heart." When the prince became king he freed the body of the Sphinx from the desert sands, and erected the immense memorial stone at the back of the sanctuary.

12. *Behold a ladder.* Many early temples in the East were in the form of a stepped pyramid, or a staged tower, with either inclined planes or stairways from each lower stage to the next higher, and with an altar, or a sanctuary or shrine, at the summit. In Jacob's vision it was probably not a ladder, but a conventional stepped-temple structure, with its stairways rising heavenward, and its sanctuary, that Jacob saw. The angel ministers were passing up and down the steps, in the service of the Most High God, who Himself appeared above the

structure. When Jacob waked he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place (or sanctuary.)" *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Threshold Covenant.*

It was an ancient custom to erect stones in memory of remarkable events, and especially in memory of miraculous divine help. In the case of Theophanies it was a natural addition to the custom to consecrate the stones themselves, and to reverence them as sanctuaries or places of sacrifice where divine worship was paid. More than this is not said of the Jacob-stone. Memorial stones of this kind long continued beside the sanctuaries of the Israelite cultus, especially in the northern kingdom; even to Isaiah (19.19) they are not objectionable as memorials of Jehovah. Among the Canaanites, however, they were inseparably bound up with the worship of Baal, and the popular consciousness accordingly thought of them as Baal pillars. For this reason, even laws and prophets (Ex. 23.24; 34.13; Lev. 26.1; Mic. 5.12) of early date are opposed to them, and Deut. 16.22 directly forbids such Masseboth to be placed beside the altars of Jehovah. *Dillmann.*

20. *And Jacob vowed a vow.* I remarked that our old guide every here and there placed a stone on a conspicuous bit of rock, or two stones one upon another, at the same time uttering some words, which I learned were a prayer for our safe return. This explained to me what I had frequently seen before in the East, and particularly on a highroad leading to a great tower, whence the town is first seen, and where the Eastern traveler sets up his stone accompanied by a devout exclamation, as if it were in token of his safe arrival. Nothing is so natural in a journey over a dreary country as for a solitary traveler to sit himself down fatigued, and to make the vow that Jacob did. *Morier.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Padan-aram, paragraphs 14, 22; Haran, paragraphs 23–25; Beersheba, paragraph 148; Bethel, paragraph 138; Jordan Valley, paragraphs 104, 105.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Do you believe that a man seven miles away from an orchard could see some boys stealing apples there? A boy on the ground was keeping watch; he could not see a man looking at him from a distance of seven miles; another boy was in the tree getting the fruit; he could see only the fruit he was so eager to steal. Yet the great astronomer, Professor Mitchell, was looking at those boys through his telescope, and seeing them as plainly as though he were on the spot. Professor Mitchell was observing the sun, and just as it was setting, the top of the hill, orchard, boys and all, came into the rays of his great telescope. The boys thought no one was in the orchard, and therefore no one could see them.

Jacob thought of God as present only in special places. Our lesson tells us how he learned that God was everywhere.

For Older Pupils. From that doubly treacherous act by which his father was beguiled and his brother defrauded, Jacob gained both the blessing and the patrimony; but what did he lose? Peace of mind, his father's trust, and his brother's love. Although Esau had so solemnly vowed vengeance, yet Rebekah knew that if Jacob absented himself for a time Esau would soon forget his resentment. The passionate, hasty man is not the one we need to fear; his

rage will quickly spend itself in words. Jacob started on his journey. This, it is almost certain, was the first time of his leaving his father's home. *F. W. Robertson.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Ladder to Heaven

The Ladder of Time.

I count this thing to be grandly true:
That a noble deed is a step toward God—
Lifting the soul from the common sod
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by things that are under foot;
By what we have mastered of good and gain,
By the pride deposed and the passion slain
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;
But the dreams depart and the vision falls,
And the sleeper wakens on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached by a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round. *J. G. Holland.*

The True Staircase by which Heavenly Messengers ascend and descend is the Son of Man. It is He who really bridges the interval between Heaven and earth, God and man. In His person these two are united. You can not tell whether Christ was more divine or human, more God or man—solidly based on earth, as this massive staircase, by His real humanity, by His thirty-three years engagement in all human functions and all experiences of this life, He is yet familiar with eternity, His name is "He that came down from Heaven," and if your eye follows step by step to the heights of His person, it rests at last on what you recognize as divine. His love it is that is wide enough to embrace God on the one hand, and the lowest sinner on the other. Truly He is the way, the staircase, leading from the lowest depths of earth to the highest height of Heaven. *Marcus Dods.*

Are we Alive to the Message? When those miners in Colorado were buried alive, one day a boy in a field thought he heard a tapping on a deserted iron tubing. He went for help, and men came who decided that the miners were alive. Quickly an electric wire was brought over the mountain. A bulb was lowered so that the miners had electric light. Food was sent down, and messages of love from the miners' families. One miner knew a little of telegraphy, and so at last communication was established. There was a sensitive wire, and these little signals, giving the news of the life of these men, who for days had been supposed to be dead, filled the whole camp with a riot of joy and thanksgiving. And is it nothing that at last some nerve in man responds to the signals that come from the hitherto unseen and unknown God? Is it a

little thing for Jacob that Heaven seems near to him, in the hour of repentance and prayer and forgiveness? So near that a ladder could reach from earth to Heaven, and that angels could come and go? *N. D. Hillis.*

The Ladder of Prayer.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parchèd grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all — the distant and the near —
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We stand how weak; we rise how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others — that we are not always strong?
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?

Archbishop Trench.

II Surely the Lord is in this Place

Jacob's Lesson. "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not," exclaimed Jacob. Jacob was surprised to have a vision of God in a place where he had not looked for Him. He had thought of God as the early Israelites did, as dwelling in special places, where he was to be worshiped. He now learned that God was in the place of his troubled slumber, and he had not known it. The greater truth begins to dawn upon his consciousness that God is about him everywhere he may go. "The God of Bethel" has from this incident become a phrase expressive of God's ever-watchful care.

Live as in God's Sight. An eminent preacher was once a station-master on a railroad. Shortly after he began the work, he tells us, a heavy special train came in at the station. "The engine-driver jerked his thumb mysteriously over his shoulder as he drifted past, and the front guard, jumping off, said, 'Now, lads, look alive, the superintendent's aboard!' Ah, what an electric shock that gave us all. For to us, at that distant station, he was only a name. And now our work must be done under his very eye!" Shumann frequently reminded his pupils that they should always play as if in the presence of the masters. If we always worked and played as in the presence of our Master, if a sense of the truth of God's presence everywhere were at all times a check upon our actions, how different our lives would be!

Thou God seest me. When sudden and terrible misfortune had befallen Job, and even his friends had turned against him, he cried out in wild despair, "Oh, that I knew where I might find God!" Job found God at last, and was able to say with certainty, "Now mine eye seeth Thee."

"Thou God seest me." Is this a terrifying or a comforting thought? If we think of God only as a righteous Judge who punishes each one as he deserves, it can not fail to be a terrifying thought. In a home entered by a burglar there was a marble bust of Guido's *Ecce Homo* — the thorn-covered head of Christ. When the burglar had robbed the house of many valuables and departed, it was

discovered that he had carefully turned this bust round with face toward the wall. He would not have the marble eyes of Christ behold his crime. When we do a deed of which we are ashamed, and we would exclaim, "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence, O Lord?" we must answer with David, "If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell behold, thou art there."

"Thou God, seest me, is the text I like best," said Mr. Barrie's mother. "I turn't up, often, often in my Bible. I read from the beginnin' o' the chapter, but when I come to 'Thou, God, seest me,' I stop. I let the Book lie in my lap; for aince a body's sure o' that, they're sure o' all."

It is only when we think of God as loving and merciful as well as just, that we find comfort in the thought of His presence.

"O power, more near my life than life itself,
I fear not Thy withdrawal; more I fear,
Seeing, to know Thee not,"

says Lowell, and this only should be our fear.

III I WILL SURELY GIVE THE TENTH UNTO THEE

Hoarding is Losing. "I will not give away my perfume," said a rose-bud, holding its pink petals tightly wrapped in their tiny green case. The other roses bloomed in splendor, and those who enjoyed their fragrance exclaimed at their beauty and sweetness; but the selfish bud shriveled and withered away unnoticed.

"No, no," said a little bird, "I do not want to sing." But when his brothers soared aloft on joyous wings, pouring a flood-melody, making weary hearers forget sorrow and bless the singers, then the forlorn little bird was lonesome and ashamed. He tried to sing, but the power was gone; he could make only a harsh, shrill chirp.

"If I give away my wavelets, I shall not have enough for myself," said the brook. And it hoarded all its water in a hollow place, where it formed a stagnant, slimy pool.

A boy who loved a fresh wide-awake rose, a buoyant singing bird and a leaping refreshing brooklet thought on these things, and said: "If I would have, and would be, I must share all my goods with others; for,

"To give is to live
To deny is to die." *Popular Education.*

How to acquire the Art of Living. Once upon a time a sixteen year old lad started forth to make his fortune, with all his earthly possessions tied up in a small bundle. He took passage on an Erie Canal boat and the captain, becoming interested in him, asked him what he could do to earn a living. "I can make soap and candles," he replied. "Some one will soon be a great soap-maker in New York," returned the captain, "and that some one may be you. Make an honest pound. Give your heart to the Lord, and give Him His tenth of every dollar you make." The boy promised to follow his advice. He began to make soap, and to give away one tenth of what he earned. He prospered in business, and was soon giving two tenths, three tenths, five tenths. Before Mr. Colgate died, for he was the lad we are talking about, he gave all his income to God's cause.

Is Anything Wrong with the Purse-holders? Who makes you to differ, and why? Why did God choose to give some of you more money than He has given to your neighbors? There was a certain poor widow who cast two mites into the treasury, and she has become a very popular character, and many of us are apt to talk complacently about our "mites." Softly, am I a poor widow? God has elected many to the privilege of dropping into His treasury on any one Sunday more money than that poor widow ever touched in her whole life; and God will demand of them an accounting whether they have done it. When a Christian man holds money that honestly belongs to him, it ought to mean a greater advantage to the whole country, and to the cause of God, that the money has come to him, than if the same money had been given to any one else, or to some public treasury. An all-wise God has chosen this particular man to the office of purse-holder, and He chooses him for the benefit of all; and unless they are all benefited, there is something wrong with the office-holder. *William R. Richards,* in *God's Choice of Men.*

A Noble Resolve. I will place no value on any thing I have or may possess except in relation to the kingdom of Christ. If anything will advance the interests of that kingdom, it shall be given away or kept, only as by the giving or keeping of it I shall most promote the glory of Him to whom I owe all my hopes in time and eternity. *David Livingstone.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Some folks give according to their means, and some according to their meanness. *George Eliot.*

The Lord doesn't look so much at what you've given as at what you have left. *An Old Writer.*

Live innocently; God is present. *Motto over the door of the house of Linnæus.*

I save all I can, and give all I can; that is, all I have. *John Wesley.*

Keep much in the presence of God; never see the face of man till you have seen the face of God. *Robert Murray McCheyne.*

My most passionate desire is to have a clearer and fuller vision of God. *Tennyson.*

To us the angels descending are the intimations God gives us of His Spirit, the angels ascending are our prayers. *F. W. Robertson.*

If your spirit is reverent, it will discern God on a moorland waste: if your spirit is thoughtless and careless, it will fail to find Him in the face of Jesus Christ. *B. F. Meyer.*

Prayer is the outlet upward for gratitude, and yearning desires for blessing; it is the inlet through which the supplies of grace pour downward into the heart. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Man was made to look upward: though you have but a little room, do you fancy that God is not there, too, and that it is impossible to live there in a life that shall be somewhat lofty? *Maeterlinck.*

After sixty years of public life I hold more strongly than ever to this conviction, deepened and strengthened by long experience, of the reality, the nearness, and the personality of God. *Gladstone.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

They should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being. Acts 17.27, 28.

Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. John 1.51.

In peace will I both lay me down and sleep;
For thou, Jehovah, alone makest me dwell in safety. Psa. 4.8. R. V.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14.6.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Prov. 15.3.

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 2.5.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

It is a grand doctrine, an inspiring doctrine, this of the divine omnipresence. But do we think of God as present with us personally in all the experiences of life? Such a thought of Him is infinitely more needful, infinitely more precious, than any theory of His omnipresence. You know that a true friendship must have in it a wide and generous sympathy with all the trouble that there is in the world. But when trouble comes to you, you want to be sure that your friend knows of it, and feels it, and is ready to help you bear it. A general thought of your friend's goodness is not enough. What you long for is a saving presence of a personal sympathy. It is not otherwise in our relation to God. What we want, to speak plainly, is to feel that God knows what happens to us, and is with us while it happens, and loves us steadily and tenderly through it all. *Henry van Dyke,* in *The Open Door.*

THE LESSON STORY

Alarmed at Esau's threats against his brother's life, Rebekah planned to save Jacob by sending him away from home till Esau's anger should pass away. To accomplish her purpose, she told Isaac that Jacob must not marry a Canaanitish woman as Esau had done. Isaac agreed with her, sent for Jacob, bade him go to his mother's relations in Padan-aram to seek a wife among them, and then sent him away with his blessing.

With only his shepherd's staff, Jacob started out to win his own way in the world. Night overtook him as he was toiling up one of the hills of Bethel. As often before in his shepherd life, he lay down to rest on the bare ground, with a stone under his head. Before throwing a corner of his long robe over his head, as was his custom when sleeping thus, he looked out over the hillside and beheld all around him stones piled upon stones, seemingly reaching to Heaven; his thoughts must have been busy with his past treachery, his brother's hatred, his loneliness, the blessing received from his father and what it meant, and with thoughts of God he must have fallen asleep. Then in a vision those towering stones became a stairway that led from earth to Heaven, and upon it angels ascending and descending, while above was God Himself, and he heard the words

of comfort and assurance that God would be with him wherever he went. It was his first revelation from God.

Jacob arose, no longer a mere fugitive from justice, but a man journeying in the company of God. "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not," he exclaimed. Is it any wonder that he took the stone which had served as his pillow and set it up to bear witness to his vision and to the comforting assurance he had received of God's presence with him? This stone he called Bethel, the "House of God." Then in a sincere, though bargaining prayer, Jacob solemnly promised that if God would be with him and keep him, he would serve Him and would return to Him a tenth of all he received from Him.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The value of memorial stones — external reminders for making spiritual impressions lasting.

2. Repentance brings pardon, but does not free from the consequences of wrong-doing.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Which would be the better title for the next lesson — Jehovah wrestling with Jacob, or Jacob wrestling with Jehovah? 2. What does the prophet Hosea say about this contest with the angel, in Hos. 12.4? 3. In what way does Jacob's prayer in the next lesson show advance in religious spirit over his prayer in this lesson? 4. Of what parable spoken by Jesus does the wrestling scene remind you? (Luke 18.1–7.) 5. What does Jeremiah say, in 17.5–8, about trusting in God? 6. What parable did Jesus speak to those that trusted in their own righteousness? (Luke 18.9–14.) What other Bible names were changed? (Gen. 17.5, 15; 2 Sam. 12.25; Dan. 1.7; Mark 3.16, 17; Acts 13.9.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

"Then Jacob lifted up his feet and came into the land of the people of the East," and received a warm welcome in his mother's home. Seven years he served Laban, his mother's brother, for his younger daughter Rachel, only to be tricked as he had tricked his own father, and given Leah, the elder daughter, instead of Rachel in marriage. Seven years longer he served for Rachel, and yet six other years for his sheep and his cattle. During these years he greatly prospered; Laban and his sons became jealous of his prosperity. Their countenances were no longer "toward him as before," and Jacob deemed it time for him to leave. With his two wives and their handmaidens, his eleven sons and one daughter, and all his cattle and all his goods, Jacob fled away secretly from Laban. Laban pursued in order to recover some wooden images which Rachel had taken with her, but the images were not found in the search. After some altercation an agreement was made to separate in peace. A cairn of stones was erected to mark the spot beyond which neither company should pass with hostile intent; to this they gave Hebrew and Aramaic names meaning "a heap of witness," and also Mizpah, "watch-tower," for Laban said, "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

GOD GIVES JACOB A NEW NAME

Gen. 32.9–12, 22–30. (Read Gen. 29–35.) Commit vv. 26–28.

Golden Text

Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Luke 10.20.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 32.9–12, 22–30

9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to my kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

9. *Return unto thy country.* Gen. 31.3. *I will deal well with thee.* R. V., *I will do thee good.*

10. *Mercies.* R. V., *loving kindnesses. With my staff.* I alone, unattended. *I am become two bands.* R. V., *companies.* (See Gen. 31.5, 7, 9, 42.)

11. *The mother with the children.* As in Hos. 10.14, a proverbial expression denoting merciless cruelty. *Dillmann.*

12. *Make thy seed as the sand of the sea.* "If Jacob and his party perished by the hand of Esau, God's promise of a numerous posterity must of necessity remain for ever unfulfilled."

22. *The ford Jabbok.* The word *Jabbok* means "The Struggler." *Kent.*

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JACOB—*Tissot*

25. *The hollow.* The socket of the thigh-bone. The physical effect symbolized the end of Jacob's struggles against God's will.

28. The blessing takes the form of a change of name. Jacob is to receive a name suggestive of his success in the approaching encounter with Esau; at the same time, as the name was to the Hebrews the symbol or expression of the nature (see Isa. 1.26; 61.3), the change of name is significant of a change of character in the patriarch himself; he is to be no longer Jacob, the Crafty One, the Over-reacher, he is to be Israel, the Prince with God, who is working also to prevail. *Driver. Israel* means God's Struggler. *Kent.*

29. *Wherefore dost thou ask after my name?* It is the same one who replies to the same question from Manoah Judges. 13.18; Wherefore askest thou after my name, which is Wonderful? His name is not comprehensible for mortals, but the fact of blessing tells Jacob plainly enough who is before him, viz., the Almighty Himself. *Delitzsch.*

30. *Peniel.* Margin, *the face of God. And my life is preserved.* And my soul has been healed. *Martin Luther.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

11. *Deliver me from the hand of my brother.* When Solomon said, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth," he simply uttered a universal truth, and Shakespeare took it up, and said in a new translation that "Conscience makes cowards of us all." *John Philip Newman.*

24. *There wrestled a man with him.* Some think it important to hold to this story as literal and outward, and unsafe to regard it as mental. It is characteristic of very many of the views for which men fight, that they are excellent things to fight about, because there is no means of deciding them. If God presented a real, outward form to Jacob, so that he entered into a physical wrestling with it, it was very wonderful and divine. If God's Spirit of revelation and holiness so touched the conscience and the memories of Jacob's heart that the agitated spirit deemed itself wrestling through the body, and did, indeed, in its own awful agony agitate and dislocate the bodily frame, was it less wonderful or less divine? *A. B. Davidson.*

25. *The hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint.* "The thigh is the pillar of a man's strength, and its joint with the hip is the seat of physical force for the wrestler." If the thigh-bone be thrown out of joint, the man is utterly disabled. Jacob finds that his self-reliant strength is only weakness. Jacob can no longer even stand.

Now both his mood and his method change. He can no longer wrestle, but he can cling. He does cling, exclaiming: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." And He blessed him there. Not toward "wrestling prayer," but from it and toward clinging prayer, does the incident look, and the lesson it teaches is a deep and mighty one — We overcome not as we self-reliantly trust ourselves, but as we dependently and persistently lay hold of and cling to the strength of God. *Wayland Hoyt,* in *Homiletic Review.*

26. *Let me go, for the day breaketh.* The moment must be seized, the victory must be won in solitude — the Man and we alone with no onlookers. The first streaks of the world's sun, the first faint sounds of the returning life and thoughts of the world will rob us of the blessing; and the disappointed Combatant will steal away, and leave us empty, and the strife vain. *A. B. Davidson.*

27. *What is thy name?* Before the new name could be conferred, the old name must be fully confessed — the old name and the old nature. We must know well what nature we are of, before God can change us to another. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity — create in me a clean heart." *A. B. Davidson.*

28. *Thou hast prevailed.* Jacob was about to enter the land as Jacob, the supplanter, and that would never do; he was going to win the land from Esau by guile, or as his right; and not to receive it from God. And, therefore, just as he is going to step into it, there lays hold of him, not an armed emissary of his brother, but a far more formidable antagonist. . . . He was to be taught that it was not only Esau's appeased wrath, or his own skilful smoothing of his brother's ruffled temper, that gave him entrance; but that a nameless Being, who came out upon him from the darkness, guarded the land, and that by his passport only could he find entrance. *Marcus Dods.*

29. *Wherefore dost thou ask after my name?* God refused to tell His name. In this seems to lie a most important truth. Names have a power, a strange power, of hiding God. Speech has been bitterly defined as the art of hiding thought. Well, that sarcastic definition has in it a truth. The Eternal Word is the Revealer of God's thought, and every true word of man is originally the expression of a thought; but by degrees the word hides the thought. Language is valuable for the things of this life, but for the things of the other world, it is an encumbrance almost as much as an assistance. . . . If Jacob had got a word, that word might have satisfied him. He would have said, "Now I understand God, and know all about Him." *F. W. Robertson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

22. *He rose up that night.* Journeys by night are usual in the East, but the crossing of the river with big flocks is different and unusual, required by the necessity of leaving Jacob alone during the night. It was the natural duty of the head of the party and owner of the flocks in such a case to be last on the ground and see that nothing was left behind. *Dillmann.*

28. *Thy name shall be called no more Jacob.* Among the Hebrews, the name was never the mere sign whereby one person could be distinguished from another. It always remained descriptive; it expressed the meaning of the person or thing designated. The name bore the same relation to the significance of the thing or person as the word does to the thought. It always was the expression of it. Hence when a person acquired a new rôle, or entered into new relations, or was in some sense a new man, he received a new name. Therefore Abram became Abraham; Jacob, Israel; Solomon, Jedidiah —"beloved of God." *Davidson.*

32. *Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day.* The sciatic muscle, a powerful muscle passing along the thigh. The observance of the custom of not eating the corresponding muscle in animals is enjoined in the Mishna. *Driver.*

Another memorial was the watch tower of Peniel, which years afterwards guarded the passes of the Jordan, when Gideon pursued the Midianites who were retreating into their eastern haunts, by the same approach through which the tribe of Jacob was now advancing. But the more enduring memorial is the application, almost without an allegory, into which that mysterious encounter shapes itself, on the eve of some dreadful crisis, in the solitude and darkness of some overhanging trial. It was so understood in part by the Prophets. *Stanley.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Jabbok, paragraph 110; the Eastern Range, paragraphs 106-113.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What was the prayer which Jacob offered to God at Bethel? We called it a bargaining prayer last Sunday, because he said the Lord should be his God if He would be with him, if He would keep him, if He would bring him back to his father's house in peace. To-day's lesson shows him on his return journey to his father's house, but he is very much in doubt whether or not it is to be a peaceful return. He has been absent twenty years, and he is returning with a large family and very large flocks and herds. He has learned that his brother Esau is on his way to meet him and he is exceedingly troubled. Why? He prays to God for help, and this time his prayer is very different from his former one. What does he say about himself?

For Older Pupils. Twenty years, at least, have passed since the events of our last lesson. Where has Jacob been living meanwhile? What have been the chief events of his life during these years? When he left his father's house, what did he take with him? When he returned, what were his possessions? As he started on his way, a fugitive because of his crime against Esau, God met him at Bethel, and made Himself known to him as a forgiving and protecting God. Now upon his way back to his old home, God meets him again, but this time as an unknown, awful God.

"This is exactly the reverse of what might have been anticipated," says Doctor Robertson. "You would have expected the darker vision of experience to come first. First the storm—struggle of the soul; then the vision of peace. Yet all this, tried by experience, is a most true and living account. The awful feelings about life and God are not those which characterize our earlier years. Joy marks, and ought to mark, early religion. Nay, by God's merciful arrangement, even sin is not that crushing thing in early life which it sometimes becomes in later years, when we mourn, not so much a calculable number of sinful acts, as a deep pervading sinfulness. It is as life matures that the weight of life, the burden of this unintelligible world, and the mystery of the hidden God are felt."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

The First Step toward Strength is Consciousness of Weakness. All his life long Jacob has been trusting in his own strength, furthering his own interests by his cunning scheming. Now he wrestles with an indistinctly seen Power, and in the struggle is shaken to the very depths of his nature. Not only does Jacob wrestle with God, but God wrestles with Jacob. Both win the victory, for Jacob prevails with God only after God has prevailed with Jacob. Jacob has been resisting God all his life; the resistance is brought to a final conflict. Hitherto he has compassed his ends by foul means; now he wins by fair means. God has wrestled with him till he has wrestled from him all his old self-trust, and replaced it by a strange new strength, a trust in God. He becomes weak,

and hence he becomes strong. He prevails with God and wins from Him the blessing which God has long been ready to bestow. The words of Charles Wesley's hymn makes the application of the struggle —

"Yield to me now, for I am weak;
But confident in self-despair:
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak;
Be conquered by my instant prayer.
Speak! or Thou never hence shall move,
And tell me if Thy name be Love.

"My prayer hath power with God; the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see Thee face to face:
I see Thee face to face and live;
In vain I have not wept and strove —
Thy nature and Thy name is Love."

Self-centered or Christ-centered. The old Ptolemaic Theory was that the earth was the center of the entire universe, and round it revolved all the other heavenly bodies: the true Copernican Theory is that the sun is the center of our planetary system, which is only one of a multitude of systems. Galileo declared that there were six thousand stars in the universe, and no one believed him; to-day astronomers speak of one hundred and fifty million stars, and no one doubts them. Human beings have their Ptolemaic and their Copernican systems — their center is either themselves or the Son of Righteousness.

In the pride and strength of his own self-confidence, Peter declared that he would lay down his life for Christ, and then weakly denied that he had ever known Him; but when later he was overcome with self-distrust and self-hatred he became in truth the rock on which the church was built. When he was self-centered he was vanquished; when he was Christ-centered he prevailed.

Whence Real Strength comes. If we are able to go forward in sole and simple reliance on God's might, as David did in the conflict with Goliath, all will be well. If we waver in our trust in Him, if we fly to the resources of human policy, if we seek deliverance from present evil at whatever cost, we arrest, as it were, the electrical current flowing from Heaven, and become weak as other men. How different was David confronting Goliath, and David feigning madness before King Achish! In the one case, a noble hero; in the other, a timid faltering child. *William Garden Blaikie.*

Faith and Self Despair. No man trusts God as God ought to be trusted, who does not distrust himself as he himself ought to be distrusted. To level a mountain is the only way to carry water across where it stood. You can by mechanism and locks take a canal up to the top of the hill, but you can not take a river up to the top, and the river of God's help flows through the valley and seeks the lowest levels. Faith and self-despair are the upper and the under sides of the same thing, like some cunningly woven cloth, the one side bearing a different pattern from the other, and yet made of the same yarn, and the same threads passing from the upper to the under sides. So faith and self-distrust are but two names for one composite whole. . . . When, as Wesley has it in his great hymn, "Confident in Self-despair," we cling to God, then we can say: "When I am weak, then am I strong." . . .

The world is perfectly right when it says: "If you believe you can do a

thing, you have gone a long way towards doing it." The expectation of success has often the knack of fulfilling itself. But the world does not know our secret, and our secret is that our humble faith brings into the field the reserves with the Captain of our salvation at the head. Therefore a self-distrusting Christian can say, and say without presumption, "I can do all things in Christ, strengthening me from within." *Alexander Maclaren,* in *Last Sheaves.*

II Intensity of Desire

I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me. Thus Jacob exclaimed when he wrestled with his divine adversary. It was the intensity of his desire which brought out all the strength of his will, and gained for him the blessing. Do we as earnestly long for God's blessing? We have seen in Christ the life that should be our pattern. Our wills are like the sensitized glass in the photographer's camera on which no impression is made by objects dimly lighted up, but which receive a graven image of objects on which the light falls with intensity.

There is an instrument called a focimeter which brings the rays of light to a focus before the camera. Our wills would act and make us more like Christ if the rays of our desires in all their intensity were focused on that model life. We think we desire to be more like Him — but we do not, we are hypocrites, else would we strive more earnestly to attain. If we merely say, "Oh that I were more like Him!" we express a wish in which there is no will. To wish and not to will is sure to weaken our power to will.

"Let us run the Race looking unto Jesus." How fine this picture of Paul as the runner, bent on winning the Christian race! How fixed the forward look, how eager the forward poise! In such intensity lies success. So all the leaders have come to the fore, by spurning distractions and pressing to one chosen aim. Where the difference comes in eager lives is in the goal of vision. The man with the muck-rake looks down. The social butterfly glances from flower to flower. But Paul fixes his gaze on Christ. *M. Summerbell.*

Wishing and Willing. Have you ever said, "I wish I had a more cheerful disposition?" How much do you wish it? Enough to dispose yourself so as to be in the way of getting it? Your words are idle and sinful unless you will to have it instead of wishing to have it. . . . You are disposed to look on the dark side, borrow trouble, and say discouraging things. Suppose you earnestly propose for one week to look for pleasant things and speak of them and never speak of what you dread or do not like. You will be more cheerfully and happily disposed at the end of the week, and you know it. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Scatter thy wishes, and their arrows fall
Broken and spent beneath Fate's frowning wall.
Forge from their fragments one sharp spear of will,—
The barriers frown, but thou shalt pierce them still.

Priscilla Leonard.

III Thy Name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel

Jacob's Changed Name and Nature. If read as a simple recital of facts or as a mere incident in the life of Jacob, the story of the midnight struggle by

the brook is one of uncertainty and mystery; but if read as a graphic and sublime parable, it is full of suggestion and meaning.

Instead of thinking of Jacob, suppose we think of a soul turning away from the world and coming back to God; instead of Esau, a sinful and irrevocable past from which that soul can not escape; instead of Laban, the spirit of the world which would pursue and recapture the soul which would fain regain its freedom; instead of Jabbok, the dividing line which separates the evil from the good, a line which is reached sooner or later by every one; and instead of the mysterious stranger who comes out of the darkness and arrests the self-confident Jacob, an aroused conscience which can not possibly be put aside: have we not by so doing entered into the very heart of the chapter, and brought its lessons home to ourselves? When read intelligently this protracted struggle is the story of a soul's conversion, with the results of that conversion clearly brought to light.

It was not enough that Jacob's name be changed, that a definite and positive work be accomplished in his being and character, and that from henceforth he is to have new relationships with God; but in addition there is to be an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace. Hence the hollow of his thigh was touched, and for the remaining years of his life he had in his walk and bearing the distinct mark of this midnight struggle.

The great need of the religious life of this day is the "halting thigh"—the clear, plain, positive mark—by which the world can see at once the sharp difference that distinguishes the Christian from those by whom he is surrounded. In business the Christian's walk should be entirely unlike that of other men. The cunning, the trickery, the unscrupulousness, the greed, the avarice, the dishonest competitions, the unholy rivalries, the combinations, the sharp practices, are unworthy of the one who has met the angel by the brook, and upon whom the divine hand has been laid. *The Christian Advocate.*

The New Names. When the Japanese embraces Christianity he does it as thoughtfully and as thoroughly as he does everything else; he brings to it an imaginative penetration which is not always found in other nations.

When Bishop Brent was visiting in Japan he was asked to officiate at a baptism of Japanese converts. There were three people who desired to be baptized. The first to come forward was an old, old man.

"What is your name?" asked the Bishop.

And the old man answered, "Simeon," and then he smiled and added, "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

The second man was young and strong.

"The name?" said the bishop.

"Cornelius," the young man answered.

And the bishop, looking on him in his youth and enthusiasm, understood why he had chosen the name of the centurion, that "just man," whom Peter baptized in Cæsarea so long ago. "Of a truth" . . . God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

"The third to come to the font was a child; a little lad ten years old, clinging to his father's hand.

"The name of the child?" asked the bishop.

And the father answered, "His name is Isaac. I give him to the Lord."

And the bishop marveled at the wisdom and simplicity and reverent understanding of this people. *Youth's Companion.*

Who may bear the Name of Christians. Suppose a little boy says to me, "What is it for me to be a Christian? I would like to be one, but I don't know what it means. I don't feel that I am very wicked. I don't do right always, but I am sorry for it when I do not. I get angry with my seat-mate at school sometimes, and I scratch him or pound him; but then I am ashamed of it, and we make it all up afterward. What have I got to do in order to be a Christian?"

Well, I would not wonder if you were a Christian now. I judge that you have had a good Christian father or mother, and then it is perfectly natural for you to become a Christian, and perhaps so early that you never knew when it came. Having started right, you will not have to turn around and go in the other direction. When little people of Christian homes commence asking such questions, that is not the beginning of their Christian liberty, but simply the time when the crust of the ground begins to crack and let through the tiny sprout that has been long pushing up underneath.

You want to know what a boy or girl Christian has to do? Do you know what kind of a boy Jesus was when He was twelve years old? We read, He obeyed His father and mother, and went to the temple and tried to learn about God, and what God wanted Him to do. Now, to be a Christian is to be like Christ; to be a boy Christian, to be like the boy Christ. *Charles H. Parkhurst.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees. *Victor Hugo.*

There are in human hearts battle fields as grand as Thermopylæ, as great as Waterloo. *Boonton.*

No man can live half a life when he has genuinely learned that it is a half life: the other half, the higher half, must haunt him. *Phillips Brooks.*

The way to get out of self-love is to love God. *Phillips Brooks.*

The sinew of self-esteem is the first to shrink when we meet God face to face. *Sunday School Times.*

When the fight begins within himself, a man's worth something. *Browning.*

The virtue that comes out victorious in the crisis must have been nourished and cultivated in the humdrum moments. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Peniel! We have seen Thee, God, at last,
And felt Thy withering touch upon the wrong,
So perish it! For tho' we wrestled long,
In loving urgence Thou didst hold us fast. *James Buckham.*

I will never presume, because I am a man; I will never despair, because I have a God. *Feltham.*

God-haunted our lives are, until they give themselves to God, as the brain of a sleeper is haunted by daylight until he opens his eyes and gives himself a willing servant to the morning. *Phillips Brooks.*

This is life; a long wrestling against the love of God, who longs to make us loyal; as the years go on, we begin to cling where once we struggled; and as the morn of Heaven breaks we catch glimpses of the Angel face of love, and

hear His whispered name; and as He blesses us, we awake to find ourselves living, and face to face with God — and that is Heaven itself. *B. F. Meyer.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth. Psa. 8.1.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. Jas. 4.10.

We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead. 2 Cor. 1.8, 9.

The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. Rom. 8.16.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15.7.

Covet earnestly the best gifts. 1 Cor. 12.31.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. Prov. 22.1.

Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord. Psa. 4.5.

O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Psa. 84.12.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Jacob was at first as weak a character as we can conceive. But he laid hold on God, and would not let the blessing go; till at last we find him grown to the spiritual stature in which he passes from our sight.

So it may be with any here. Who feels his weakness? Who most distrusts himself? God's love has come within your reach. Above all, lay hold of Christ. He is near you — nearer your youth than, if you refuse Him now, He can ever appear to your later years. *George Adam Smith.*

THE LESSON STORY

After twenty years' absence Jacob is about to reënter the Land of Promise. Will there be a welcome for him there? He sends messengers to his brother Esau, and they bring back word that Esau is coming to meet him with four hundred men. Then Jacob is greatly afraid, and good reasons has be for his fears; his conscience tells him that Esau is coming to avenge the wrong done him. Jacob prays God to deliver him from the hand of Esau, humbly admitting that he is not worthy the least of God's mercies. Then he sends presents to his brother — drove after drove of animals — hoping thereby to make restitution and to appease Esau's anger. His family he sends on ahead, and he himself spends the night alone by the brook Jabbok. He has come to the turning-point in his life. Memories of the past crowd upon him. While he is planning and scheming how to win the day with his brother, he is greatly humbled in spirit. His sin has been against God as well as against his brother; it is God who is the real antagonist. He is in the grasp of a mysterious wrestler. All night long they struggle, and neither prevails till toward morning Jacob's thigh is put out of joint. Weak though he now is, Jacob persists in the struggle, saying, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," for he realizes that he is face to face with God. "What is thy name?" "Jacob." "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and

hast prevailed." "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name." This request of Jacob's is denied, but the coveted blessing is given him.

Jacob leaves the place he names Peniel, the Face of God, bearing in his halting gait the lasting mark of the troubled night. Esau appears in the distance. Jacob approaches with oriental ceremony, bowing himself seven times to the ground, but Esau impulsively falls on his neck and kisses him. After much urging Esau accepts Jacob's gifts and the brothers separate, Esau going to Seir and Jacob to Succoth.

Jacob has become Israel. His name is changed because his character is changed. The double-dealing, crooked-working man is honest and true at last, the self-trusting man is become God-trusting. From this time onward, though he does not lose his politic self-resourcefulness, he becomes more and more "a prince with God, a just and God-fearing Israelite."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jacob the typical Jew.
2. It is impossible to standardize conversion, because you can not reduce human nature to a uniformity. *John Watson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. After the meeting with Esau, Jacob went to Shechem. What event, centuries later, made famous the well that he dug there? (John 4.5–29.) 2. Why did Joseph have a coat of many colors, and what trouble did it occasion? (Gen. 37.3, 4.) 3. What did his brothers afterwards do with the coat? (Gen. 37.13–33.) 4. What did his double dream indicate to Joseph's brothers? (Gen. 41.32.) 5. When was there a literal fulfillment of Joseph's dream? (Gen. 42.6.) 6. "His father kept the saying in his mind," is the translation of the Revised Version of the last clause of verse 11; what incident in the life of Jesus and His mother does this recall? (Luke 2.49–51.) 7. To what sins were Joseph's brothers led by their envy of Joseph? (Cruelty to Joseph and to their father, inhuman conduct in calmly eating after casting him into the pit, purposed murder, selling Joseph as a slave, lying to their father, hypocrisy in trying to console Jacob.) 8. What previous lesson showed how jealousy and hatred lead to sin? (Lesson IV, First Quarter.) 9. What was the law in regard to the covering of a pit? (See Ex. 21.33, 34.) 10. What prophet was put into a "dungeon" similar to the "pit" into which Joseph was cast? (Jer. 38.6.) 11. What does Jeremiah in 8.22; 46.11, say about balm in Gilead? 12. What was the price of a male slave between eight and twenty years of age as fixed by law and recorded in Lev. 27.5? 13. Long afterwards what did the brothers say about their treatment of Joseph at this time? (Gen. 42.21.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Jacob moved from Succoth to Shechem, where he bought a piece of ground and dug a well which still bears his name. From there he went to Bethel, the scene of his earliest vow, and then on to Ephrath (Bethlehem). On the way to Ephrath, Benjamin was born and Rachel died. Jacob finally settled at Hebron where his father Isaac was living, and there, later, occurred Isaac's death.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS

Gen. 37.5–28. (Read the chapter.) Commit vv. 26–28.

Golden Text

For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. James 3.16.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 37.5–28

5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

7 For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed *the flock* in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to Him, Here *am I.*

14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and, behold, *he was* wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks.*

17 And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And Reuben heard *it,* and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit that *is* in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* colours that *was* on him;

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh: and his brethren were content.

28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

5–11. Two boyish dreams, such as naturally increased his brothers' dislike for him. In the eyes of the narrator, they are divinely-sent presentiments of his future greatness. The double dream indicates the certainty of the fulfilment. *Driver.*

11. *His father observed the saying.* R. V., *his father kept the saying in his mind.*

12. *In Shechem.* Where Jacob had bought a field. (Gen. 33.19.)

14. *Go, I pray thee.* R. V., *Go now.*

19. *This dreamer.* Margin, *this master of dreams.*

23. *They stripped Joseph out of his coat.* They intended to use this coat so as to explain to their father what had happened to Joseph. (Gen. 37.31–33.) The Hebrew word translated "of many colors" occurs only here. Some commentators think it means "long-sleeved."

25. *A company of Ishmaelites.* R. V., *a caravan of Ishmaelites.* The plain near Dothan is still part of a regular trade route from Gilead through the plain of Sharon to Egypt. *Spicery.* Probably gum tragacanth. *Myrrh.* Ladanum. These gums were needed in Egypt for use in embalming and also for incense and medicine.

26. *And conceal his blood.* That its cry for vengeance may not be heard. Compare Ezek. 24.7, 8; Is. 26.21; Job 16.18. *Driver.*

27. *His brethren were content.* R. V., *his brethren hearkened unto him.*

28. *Midianites merchantmen.* Verse 25 speaks of a caravan of Ishmaelites, There may have been several tribes traveling together in one caravan for the sake of safety, or the term Ishmaelite may be here used as a general name, while Midianite is the special name of the tribe. *"They"* is usually taken as referring to Joseph's brothers, who sold Joseph during the absence of Reuben. Another explanation suggests that "they" refers to the Midianite traders, who passed by and kidnapped Joseph while his brothers were at their meal, and then sold him to the Ishmaelites. This would account for Reuben's surprise mentioned in verse 29, and also for Joseph's statement in Gen. 40.15 that he was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews.

28. *Twenty pieces of silver.* The average price of a slave was thirty shekels. A slave afterwards cost just as much in the market of Alexandria. The Midianites would, of course, make a profit by the transaction. *Delitzsch.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *Let us go to Dothan.* If you were to ask a native of Shechem to-day,

"Where is the best pasture-ground for sheep?" he would tell you, "Dothan." Because there would be better pasture there than at Shechem is, I think, the reason they moved on. Joseph goes after them; they see him "afar off." Here is a touch of local truth; for after climbing the high hill north of Samaria which would be Joseph's route, he would then descend the steep northern slope of the ridge, and at Dothan would be easily seen afar off. His figure would tell against the sky-line. They recognized his figure and dress, sharp-sighted, as all Arab shepherds are to-day. *Henry A. Harper.*

25. *They sat down to eat bread.* The heartless barbarity with which the brethren of Joseph sat down to eat and drink the very dainties he had brought them from his father, while they left him, as they thought, to starve, has been regarded by all later generations as the height of hard-hearted indifference. Amos, at a loss to describe the recklessness of his own generation, falls back upon this incident, and cries war upon those "that drink wine in brooks, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment, but they are not grieved by the afflictions of Joseph." *Marcus Dods.*

26. *What profit is it if we slay our brother?* What profit! The thought is not only a crime, it is a blunder. It will not *pay* — the worst thing in the eyes of men in those times as in ours. Make a thing pay even if it is your brother's blood and the deed is more than half right. Listen to those virtuous men: "Let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." How sweet is benevolence when it pays! We see the group of merchants chattering over the lad. There is the clink of silver, and the son, the beloved son, is borne away captive, and we hear the mocking laughter of the brethren which follows him, "We shall see, we shall see what will become of his dreams."

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

9. *The eleven stars.* Does not Joseph allude to the Zodiac, the eleven brothers answering to eleven of the celestial signs, and he himself to the twelfth? This is certainly not an unnatural thought, as it is very likely that the heavens were thus measured in the days of Joseph; for the Zodiacal constellations have been distinguished among eastern nations since time immemorial. *Adam Clarke.*

10. *Shall we bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?* The Hebrew word here translated *bow down* means the manner customary in all Asia of testifying respect to kings and princes, by falling on the knee, and stooping till the forehead touches the ground. *Burder.*

23. *His coat of many colours.* Not a gay patch-work, but a long coat woven, perhaps embroidered with bright colors. The commonest coat now worn by natives of Palestine is one of broad black and white stripes. The "least common and most expensive is one that shows the greatest combination of colors, and is elaborately embroidered."

24. *They cast him into a pit.* The incident of the pit is quite in keeping with Eastern customs, for underground cisterns abound in Palestine, and when dry, were so often used for a dungeon — escape from them being impossible, from their frequently bottle-like shape — that the Hebrew word for them also means a prison. The Canaanites had already dug many such cisterns over the whole land. Towns, fields, and pastures alike needed them in a country largely dependent on rain-water as Palestine always was. The Moabite Stone of King

Meza orders every house in Korcha Dibon to have one to catch the rain water. *Geikie,* in *Hours with the Bible.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Hebron, paragraph 145; Shechem, paragraph 136; Dothan, paragraph 137; Plain of Esdraelon, paragraphs 114, 115.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When Saul was king over the Israelites, many years later than the time of the lessons we are studying, there was in his kingdom a young man named David who kept his father's sheep. David could play on the harp, and when Saul was troubled he would send for David to play before him and make him forget his troubles. Soon a giant named Goliath challenged the Israelites to come out and fight him, promising that all his people would be their servants if any one succeeded in killing him. Who can tell how David killed Goliath? After this event King Saul loved David and had him come and live with him, and he put David over his men of war. Then came a day when Saul on returning from battle was met by women singing songs of rejoicing over his triumph. But when they added that "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," Saul was very angry. "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom?" "And Saul eyed David from that day," the Bible tells us. What do you suppose "eyed" means? Envied, yes; is not that a good name for envy? He envied him and he looked at him closely, suspiciously. Do you know how Saul tried to kill David, so great was his envy? In our lesson to-day we are told how young men so envied their younger brother that they were on the point of killing him. It is the sons of Jacob we hear about now. Eleven years have passed since Jacob wrestled with God at the brook Jabbok, and he is living with his father Isaac in Hebron.

For Older Pupils.

"My masters, there's an old book you should con,
For strange adventures, applicable yet, 'tis stuffed with."

The strange adventures of Joseph read almost like a fairy tale; certainly they have all the variety of incidents and the portrayal of characters that we find in a modern novel. Throughout the story of his life, which occupies one fifth of the book of Genesis, we see the guiding hand of God, overruling all things, and furthering the steady march to its fixed goal of the divine purpose in the chosen nation.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Dreamers

Why Joseph's Dreams were Important. It was because Joseph's dreams embodied his waking ambition that they were important. Dreams become significant when they are the concentrated essence of the main stream of the waking thoughts, and picturesquely exhibit the tendency of the character. "In a dream," says Elihu, "in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men,

in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sendeth them instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose." This is precisely the use of dreams: our tendencies unbridled by reason and fact, run on to results; the purposes which the business and other good influences of the day have kept down, act themselves out in dreams, and we see the character unimpeded by social checks, and as it would be were it unmodified by the restraints and efforts and external considerations of our conscious hours. *Marcus Dods.*

From a Painting by Tissot. Copyright 1904. Used by Courtesy of M. de Brunoff
Joseph Revealing His Dream to His Brothers

Another Dreamer. One night during the darkest days of the Civil War, when for a long time all news from the front had been most disturbing, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe had her vision of victory. Under the inspiration of that dream-vision she arose and wrote her famous Battle Hymn of the Republic — "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!"

Dreams are Ideals. Some years ago Professor Tyndall delivered a remarkable address on the use of the imagination in science. He showed that this great faculty of the soul was simply invaluable in a sphere of thought where superficial minds would suppose there was no scope for its exercise. If I remember rightly, one of his illustrations was the Luminiferous Ether which no one has ever seen, or heard, or felt, which is a pure conception of the Scientific Imagination, but which is now assured to be a fact because its hypothetical existence explains the phenomena of color more fully and more perfectly than they have ever been explained before.

It was to this faculty of the soul that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers in his famous eleventh chapter. You will observe that he there defines faith to be "the essence of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen."

It was this imagination which enabled the great saints whom he marshals before us to do their mighty deeds. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and all the prophets "saw visions and dreamed dreams." With the eye of Faith or Imagination they saw "the things that are unseen and eternal," and in the strength of that Beatific Vision they accomplished gigantic moral revolutions which lifted the whole human race to higher levels of goodness and of happiness. . . .

There is nothing which ordinary Christians lack so much as this Inspired Imagination. They do not see visions. They do not dream dreams. They are human moles that burrow and grope in the darkness of narrow boundaries, of subterranean passages; and they are human eagles that spurn the low earth and soar aloft into the bright sunlight. Only eagles can see the vast horizon of life and beauty. Are you a mole or an eagle? Do you belong to the class of Christians whose imaginations have never been raised and exalted by God, or to those who see visions and dream dreams of glorious spiritual victories? *Hugh Price Hughes,* in *Ethical Christianity.*

I slept and dreamt that life was beauty;
I waked and found that life was duty.
Was thy dream, then, a shadowy lie?
Toil on, sad heart, courageously,
And thou shalt find thy dream to be
A noon-day light and truth to thee.

Dreams grow holy put in action,
Work grows fair through starry dreaming,
But when each flows on unminglingly
Both are fruitless and in vain. *A. A. Proctor.*

II Envy

The Nature of Envy. "Envy is blind and knows nothing except to depreciate the excellencies of others," wrote Livy, the old Roman historian. Hawthorne has given us a graphic picture of Envy in Roderick Elliston, whom he represents as carrying about in his bosom an enormous venomous reptile, which stung him when he thought of a brother's excellence, and gave him joy when trouble came to a friend. Let us make our own this prayer of Henry Robinson Palmer:

"From bitterness preserve me, Lord;
From jealous thoughts protect my day;
Against the stroke of envy's sword
Help me to hold my way.
And grant my soul sufficient grace
To gladden at another's prize,
And look upon his eager face
With sympathetic eyes."

Envy leads to Other Sins. Joseph's brothers deliberately agreed to murder Joseph because they hated him, and they hated him because they envied him. Their words in verse 20, "and we shall see what will become of his dreams," show what was the real motive of their crime. Joseph was his father's favorite, for this reason they hated and envied him; and he was their superior, therefore they envied and hated him the more. You remember that in Christ's

parable of the tares, when the householder asked whence came the tares, the servants replied, "An enemy hath done this." Doctor Parker tells us that in Tyndale's version the answer is "An envious person hath done this." An envious person soon becomes the enemy of the one he envies.

The Other Side. The Duchess of Argyle once wrote to the crowned heads of Europe and asked them whom they envied. The King of England, then Prince of Wales, answered: "I envy the man who belongs to his family alone, and whose movements are not watched and falsely interpreted." Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria said, "I envy the fate of the man who is not an emperor." The Czar of Russia replied: "I sincerely envy every man who is not loaded down with the cares of a great empire, and who has not to weep for the woes of a people."

From the *Youth's Companion* comes this philosophy: —

Jared Lincoln, an uneducated man, who had made within a few years a large fortune by speculation, while driving out to Central Park passed Mr. Crounse, a plainly dressed, middle-aged gentleman who was on foot.

"That man," he said to his wife, "belongs to one of the oldest families in New York. His grandfather was one of the signers of the Declaration. He has been brought up in the midst of refined and scholarly people. He belongs to a set into which I can not enter. I would give half that I am worth for his start in life."

In the meantime Mr. Crounse looked at the carriage and its sumptuous equipments, and thought, "If I had some of that man's money, how many comforts I could bring into our bare lives!"

The minister's wife, whom somebody had taken out to drive, saw one of the parishioners pass, a woman who ruled in an exclusive fashionable clique. A thrill, almost of envy, disturbed her calm breast. How pleasant it must be to live in a social atmosphere pure and refined, to escape all that is vulgar and painful in life!

The other woman's eyes grew troubled as she looked wistfully into the serene face of the clergyman's wife.

"Oh, to have her faith!" she thought. "When sickness and death come, to know where to turn as she does! To live always apart from the worry and pain of the world, close to God!"

So each man and woman went on a separate way, envying the other. For the great mistake in life is, that each of us overrates the peculiar blessing which God has bestowed upon our brother, and is blind to the good which He has given us.

III Other Reubens

Selling contrasted with Slaying. I am struck by this circumstance, namely, how possible it is to fall from a rough kind of vice, such as "Let us slay our brother," into a milder form of iniquity, such as "Let us sell our brother," and to think that now we have actually come into a state of virtue. That is to say, selling as contrasted with slaying seems so moderate and amiable a thing to do as actually to amount to a kind of virtue. Observe, the morality has not been changed, only the point in the scale has been lowered. When God comes to judge the world, He will not say, "Is this virtue and water? Is this diluted vice?" but, "Is this right? Is this wrong?" *Joseph Parker.*

Almost Right is Wrong. Like an artist who may have an excellent eye for form and yet be color-blind, so one may have a just conception of the guilt of murder, but a very defective conception of the guilt of selling one's brother. Is it right to think that one is very good merely because he has never done anything very bad? Do we not know that he who neglects a duty and he who falls into actual transgression are alike guilty? If the price of a lecture ticket is one dollar, are you who have ninety cents any more likely to hear that lecture than your friend who has twenty cents?

Two kegs of paint stood on the floor of a painter's shop, one filled with white lead, and the other with red paint. A boy came in and idly stirred the red paint with a stick, then held it up to see the paint run from it. He carelessly held the stick over the keg of white paint, and a few drops ran into it. Startled at the mischief he had done, he tried to hide the red drops by stirring them into the white lead. Slowly the red paint followed the paddle around and finally it was well mixed in, and the boy thought no one would know what he had done. But when the owner came the first thing he said was, "What is the matter with this white lead? It doesn't look very white." The Reuben who thinks he has concealed his sin, that he has not done any thing very wrong, and therefore is almost right, will find he has not deceived the divine Judge.

How the Moral Sense is Destroyed. Now it is not necessary to break a mirror to pieces in order to make it worthless. Let one go behind it with a pencil, or with a needle of the finest point, and, with delicate touch, make the smallest line through the silver coating of the back; the next day let him make another line at right angles to that; and the third day let him make still another line parallel to the first one; and the next day let him make another line parallel to the second, and so continue to do day by day, and one year shall not have passed away before that mirror will be so scratched that it will be good for nothing. It is not necessary to deal it a hard blow to destroy its power; these delicate touches will do it, little by little.

It is not necessary to be a murderer or a burglar in order to destroy the moral sense; but ah! these million little infelicities, as they are called, the scratchings and raspings, take the silver off from the back of the conscience — take the tone and temper out of the moral sense. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

How to preserve the Moral Sense. It seems to me that the shortest way to check the darker forms of deceit is to set watch more scrupulous against those which have mingled unregarded and unchastised, with the current of our life. Do not let us lie at all. Do not think of one falsity as harmless and another as slight and another as unintended. Cast them all aside; they may be light and accidental, but they are an ugly soot from the smoke of the pit, for all that; and it is better that our heart should be swept clean of them, without over-care as to which is largest or blackest. *John Ruskin.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Vision, aspiration is the first essential. *James M. Taylor.*

The space between a man's ideal and the man himself is his opportunity. *Margaret Deland.*

Who believes that dreams are only dreams, will probably find it so. *Muriel Strode.*

Obedience is the organ of spiritual vision. *F. W. Robertson.*

Some persons instead of "putting off the old man" dress him up in a new shape. *Saint Bernard.*

What I aspired to be
And was not, comforts me. *Browning.*

One's ideal must be above one, as a matter of course: it is as far as one can reach with one's soul-eyes, not reach to touch. *E. B. Browning.*

Make my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do;
Clothe with life the weak intent,
Let me be the thing I meant!

We are in such a hurry that we no longer have time to sit down and dream dreams, and no people make any intellectual advance unless they do dream their dreams. *Woodrow Wilson.*

When you and I cease to dream dreams it will be time for us to give up being municipal reformers. *Lord Rosebery.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him. Acts 7.9.

But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Gen. 50.20.

I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts 26.19.

A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones. Prov. 14.30.

Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. 4.31, 32.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We are on a path which leads upward, by sure and steady steps, when we begin to look at our future selves with eyes of noble hope and clear purpose, and see our figures climbing, with patient, dauntless effort, towards the heights of true manhood and womanhood. Visions like these are Joseph's dreams. They are stars for guidance. They are sheaves of promise. The memory of them is a power of pure restraint and generous inspiration. Oh for a new generation of day-dreamers, young men and maidens who shall behold visions. . . . As they go out from the fair gardens of visionary youth into the wide, confused, turbulent field of life, they will bring with them the marching music of a high resolve. They will strive to fulfill the fine prophecy of their own best desires. *Henry van Dyke,* in *Ships and Havens.*

THE LESSON STORY

When Joseph was seventeen years old, his father Jacob sent him to Shechem to see how it prospered with his brothers, who had gone there to pasture the flocks. Learning at Shechem that they had gone on to Dothan for better pasturage, Joseph followed them. From afar the brothers saw him coming, and

recognized him by the "coat of many colors" his father had given him. This coat was a mark of their father's favoritism, and it had aroused the envy and hatred of his brothers, which had been still further increased by the dreams Joseph told them, dreams which seemed to indicate that they would all "bow down and serve him." "Behold, this dreamer cometh," they scornfully said, and at once began to plan how they could get rid of him. "Let us kill him, cast him into a pit, and report to our father that he was slain by a wild beast, then we shall see what will become of his dreams." Reuben, however, counselled them not to shed blood, but to let him die in the pit; his secret purpose being to restore him alive to their father. Reuben's counsel prevailed. They tore off the hated coat, and, deaf to all his pleadings, they cast him into one of the empty pits, which had been dug to hold water, and then they sat down to their meal.

Seeing a caravan approaching it occurred to Judah that they could sell their brother as a slave and thus not only get rid of him but even make a profit by the transaction! Another company of Midianite merchantmen had meanwhile taken Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelite traders for thirty pieces of silver, and the purchasers took him with them to Egypt. When Reuben discovered that Joseph was gone, he realized his own responsibility for his father's grief. "The child is not," he exclaimed, "and I, whither shall I go?" The brothers took Joseph's coat, dipped it in the blood of the goat, and brought it to Jacob, who at once recognized it as Joseph's and mourned for him as dead, for, he said, "an evil beast hath devoured him."

Thus in the all-wise Providence of God, through the instrumentality of his wicked brothers, Joseph was brought into Egypt, where conditions were favorable for the development of the chosen family into a great nation.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. There are plenty of practical men to do things; what the world needs is more visionary men, more dreamers, poets, prophets, to go into the unknown and bring the interpretation of the unknown back to us. *Lyman Abbott.*

2. A plain lesson for parents. A parent should observe all his children and deal wisely with them each. There is no wrong in loving one best; a parent can not love all alike if he try. But the best-loved one is always a parent's danger; and while his heart swells with pride or hope as word or deed of a promising child pleases him, a wise love will never fail in the rebuke of fault or folly. Israel's rebuke to Joseph cut at a weed which might easily have sown itself broadcast, till the rich nature of the lad and all his powers were wasted in egotism and vanity. *Armstrong Black.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. To whom was Joseph sold by the Ishmaelites? 2. What was his master's opinion of him? (Gen. 39.3, 4.) 3. What European titles are like the word Pharaoh, merely a general title for a monarch? (Czar, Kaiser.) 4. Compare a similar use of the expression in verse 13, "Lift up thine head," in 2 Kings 25.27. 5. On what other occasion did Joseph declare that God gave him the ability to interpret a dream? (Gen. 41.16.) 6. When did Daniel make a similar statement? (Dan. 2.19, 28.) 7. Tell the story of Daniel's making known to Nebuchadnezzar his dream and then interpreting it. (Dan. 2.)

JOSEPH FAITHFUL IN PRISON

Gen. 39.20–40.15. (Read Gen. 39; 40.) Commit vv. 21, 22.

Golden Text

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2.10.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 39.20–40.15.

20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison.
21 But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.
22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer *of it*.
23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and *that* which he did, the Lord made *it* to prosper.
1 And it came to pass after these things, *that* the butler of the king of Egypt and *his* baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.
2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two *of* his officers, against the chief of the butlers and against the chief of the bakers.
3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph *was* bound.
4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.
5 And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which *were* bound in the prison.
6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they *were* sad.
7 And he asked Pharaoh's officers that *were* with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye *so* sadly to day?
8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, *Do* not interpretations *belong* to God? tell me *them*, I pray you.
9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine *was* before me;
10 And in the vine *were* three branches: and it *was* as though it budded, *and* her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:
11 And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup unto Pharaoh's hand.
12 And Joseph said unto him, This *is* the interpretation of it: The three branches *are* three days:
13 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place; and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.
14 But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:
15 For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

20. *Joseph's master.* Potiphar. (Gen. 39.1.)

23. *The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his* (Joseph's) *hand.* He gave himself no trouble about anything which he had intrusted to Joseph.

1. *The butler.* The Hebrew word signifies a cup bearer. *Clarke.*

2. *Pharaoh.* Not a personal name, but a general title by which all the rulers of ancient Egypt were known. *The chief of the bakers.* There were many officials at the Egyptian court. "A superintendent of the bakery is mentioned in Erman's Life in Ancient Egypt."

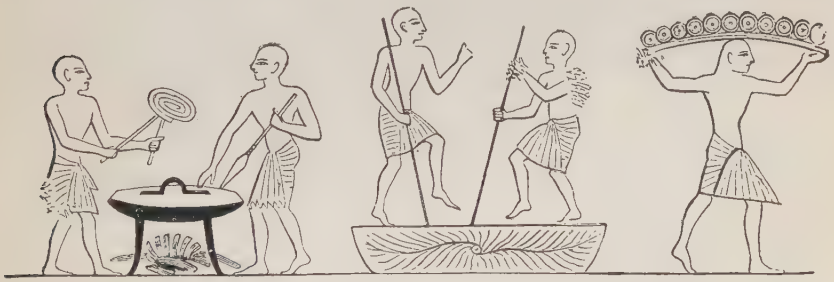
3. *Joseph was bound.* Probably the word means confined.

4. *He served them.* In 39.22 Joseph is appointed over the other prisoners; here he is appointed to wait upon the King's officials.

5. *Each man according to the interpretation of his dream.* Each man had a dream which had for him a special meaning.

8. *Do not interpretations belong to God?* If He has sent a significant dream, He alone can give the solution. *Clarke.*

14. *Think on me.* R. V., *have me in thy remembrance.*



Egyptian Bakers. From a Wall Painting in a Tomb

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *The Lord was with Joseph.* You can hear him saying deep down in his heart, and almost unconsciously to himself, "If the world is full of hatred there is all the more need that at least one man should forgive and love; if men's hearts are black with selfishness and ambitions, there is more reason for me to be pure and to do my best for all whom my services can reach; if cruelty, lying, and fraud meet me at every step, all the more am I called to conquer these by integrity and guilelessness. . . .

Such was his light heartedness which sprang from his integrity of conscience, that he was free from all absorbing anxiety about himself, and had leisure to amuse and help his fellow prisoners, so that such promotion as a jail could afford he won, from a dungeon to a chain, from a chain to a word of honor. Thus even in the unlatticed dungeon the sun and moon look in upon him and bow to him; and while his sheaf seems at its poorest, all rust and mildew, the sheaves of his masters do homage. *Marcus Dods.*

22. *The prison.* "A place where the King's prisoners were bound" is described in the Hebrew Bible by a word which Delitzsch explains as meaning

"The fortress surrounded by a wall." And such a prison, called by them the White Castle, is mentioned by Thucydides and Herodotus, as existing in Memphis, and is known under the same name on many Egyptian inscriptions. This citadel comprised the barracks of a garrison, some temples, and especially the prisons, and was under an officer of engineers, known as the Superintendent-in-chief of the Walls and Fortifications of Memphis. Potiphar, as Minister of Police, was, no doubt, the head of the citadel, or "House of the prison," as it was called in the Hebrew of Genesis. *Geikie, Hours With the Bible.*

15. *I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.* Conscience is either the best friend on earth, or the greatest enemy on earth. And man had better have all the world against him, than to have his conscience against him; and if all the world be against a man, yet if his conscience be for him, if his conscience befriend him, it will help him to bear up with comfort. *Samuel Slater.*

Suffering is always unwelcome. But when we suffer wrongfully, there seems to be an added bitterness to the pain. The criticism which we deserve has a sharp edge; but the undeserved suspicion and censure is two-edged. The harvest of sorrow that comes to us as the result of our own sowing is painful; but that which comes upon us without deserving is a great grief. But it is for the martyr spirit that the highest place and deepest joy is reserved. If we can bear patiently, unswervingly, the malice and pain of wrongfully impugned motives and bitter speaking, we enter "the noble army of martyrs who praise Him." *Cornelius Woelfkin.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

20. *Joseph's master.* Potiphar was, no doubt, living at Memphis. His name means "Dedicated to the Sun-God" (whose worship had its great center close by at On). Potiphar was probably what we would call "Head of the Police," having a charge which was a semi-military appointment, and a post of much power and dignity. *A. S. Alger.*

The position of Joseph, as head over all the slaves in his master's house, and over all the household affairs, was one which constantly presents itself from the earliest times on the monuments and in the literature of Egypt. Every great family had a slave thus placed over the rest, and, indeed, Joseph himself, after his elevation, had such a major-domo. Whenever grain is being measured, or metal weighed, or building or agricultural work is going forward, the paintings show us the head-overseer of the household with a short rod in his hand, or with a writing tablet in his hand and a pen behind his ear, to take down the number of sheaves, or of casks, or of the cattle or flocks; and, like Joseph, he is expressly described as the "overseer." *Geikie, Hours with the Bible.*

13. *Pharaoh shall life up thine head.* The ancients, in keeping their reckonings or accounts of time, or their list of domestic officers or servants, made use of tables with holes bored in them, in which they put a sort of pegs, or nails with broad heads, exhibiting the particulars, either number or name, or whatever it was. These nails or pegs the Jews called *heads*, and the sockets of the heads they called *bases*. The meaning, therefore, of Pharaoh's *lifting up his head* is, that Pharaoh would take out the peg, which had the cup-bearer's name on the top of it, to read it, *i. e.* would sit in judgment, and make examination into his accounts; for it seems very probable that both he and the baker had been either

suspected or accused of having cheated the King, and that, when their accounts were examined and cast up, the one was acquitted, while the other was found guilty. And though Joseph uses the same expression in both cases, yet we may observe that, speaking of the baker, he adds, that "Pharaoh shall lift up thy head from off thee," *i. e.* shall order thy name to be struck off the list of his servants, by taking thy peg out of the socket. *Bibliotheca Biblica.*

14. *Make mention of me unto Pharaoh.* The cup-bearer's office, we can see on the inscriptions, was one of honor. It was near the King's birthday, and it was common to have rejoicings on that day. It was considered holy, and, as now, amnesties for past offences were granted; all Joseph asks is that his case may be mentioned to Pharaoh. *Henry A. Harper.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Egypt, paragraphs 26–31; Memphis, paragraph 45.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What dreams did Joseph have when a lad in his father's home? What did the dreams mean? What do you suppose he thought about the likelihood of his dreams coming true when he was being taken to Egypt and sold as a slave? He was purchased by an Egyptian officer, and in a short time was promoted to a position of great trust in that household. His troubles were not over with, however, for soon he was put into prison on a false charge. What do you suppose now were his expectations in regard to the fulfilment of his dreams? Let us see what he does in prison, whether he is cast down and hopeless, whether he has lost all faith in himself and in his future and his Father's care.

For Older Pupils. Dramatists and novelists who make it their business to give accurate representations of human life, proceed upon the understanding that there is a plot in it. And the plot is pronounced good, in proportion as, without violating truths and nature, it brings the leading characters into situations of extreme danger or distress, from which there seems no possible exit, and in which the characters themselves may have fullest opportunity to display and ripen their individual excellencies. How flat and tame would this narrative have read had Joseph by easy stages come to the dignity he at last reached through a series of misadventures that called out and ripened all that was manly and strong and tender in his character! And take out of your own life all your difficulties, all that ever pained, agitated, depressed you, all that disappointed or postponed your expectations, all that suddenly called upon you to act in trying situations, all that thereby put you to proof — take all this away, and what do you leave, but a blank, insipid life, that not even yourself can see any interest in? *Marcus Dods,* in *Expositor's Bible.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I It Came to Pass

No Man liveth unto Himself. There is a little upset in the King's house and, somehow or other, that will be linked with all these events that are hap-

pening a little way off. The chief butler gives Pharaoh the cup with a fly in it, and the chief baker spoils a baking. These things are to be added to some other things, and out of this combination there is to arise one of the most pathetic and beautiful incidents to be found in all the treasure house of history.

We do not know what is transpiring around us, and how we are linked on to collateral processes. There is a main line in our lives: there are also little branch lines. You jostle against a man, and get into conversation with him, and you learn from him what you would have given gold for, had you known where it was to be found. Everything in life has a meaning. No man can do without his fellow men. *Joseph Parker.*

The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not the great Napoleon
Stops his horse and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowst thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone. *Emerson.*

A large Vision of Relations. On an inland hillside, a tree has forced its roots down among the rock crevices, splitting the bowlder into fragments until it has disintegrated and become a constituent of the soil. The chemical elements once in the rock are washed out through watercourses until they are finally mingled with the salts of the sea. The marine animal, miles below the surface, and leagues out from the land, subsists because the sea is saline. Who thinks of connecting the animal life of the deep with the vegetable life of the mountain — the fish with the tree? Yet these are true relations; and if we do not see them it is because we do not think. And we do not see where trivial deeds may land us, because we do not look for relations. We get into difficulties, we injure ourselves and our neighbors, we neglect duties, we countenance doubtful occupations and amusements, because we do not think out to the end what the interlinking and out-working of their relations will be. "There is nothing," says George Eliot, "petty to the mind that has a large vision of relations." If we would have large characters, we must have this large vision. "We are not strong," says Emerson, "by our power to penetrate, but by our relatedness." Would you be strong? Think things through. *Patterson Du Bois.*

The most Vital Steps in Life turn on Small Pivots. The Bible abounds in instances of this truth, from Pharaoh's daughter going down to bathe in the Nile, to Philip's meeting the Eunuch on his way to Gaza. Livingstone intended to go to China; but while he was boarding in London, Robert Moffat happened in one evening, and talked to the boarders about Africa; that talk decided the young Scotsman toward the most wonderful missionary career of the nineteenth century. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

The most trifling matters may, at times, turn out to be the most important link in a chain of events by which the Almighty God is helping forward the development of His grand designs. Look, for instance, at Esther 6.1, and what do you see? A heathen monarch spending a restless night. No uncommon circumstance, we may suppose, and yet, this very circumstance was a link in a great chain of providences at the end of which you find the marvelous deliverance of the oppressed seed of Israel. *C. H. Mackintosh.*

It is utterly impossible for us to judge of any event, whether it is a blessing

or a misfortune, from simply looking at the event itself; because we do not know the whole. Fancy the buying of a slave in a cave in Canaan, and straightway there springs up in your breast a feeling of indignation. Pass on a few years, and we find Joseph happy, honored, beloved; two nations, at least, are saved by him from famine. *F. W. Robertson.*

II Faithfulness

The Example of Joseph. When Joseph was sold as a slave to Potiphar his faithfulness in his service caused him to find grace in his master's sight, and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. When Joseph was cast into prison his faithfulness there caused him to find grace in the sight of the Keeper of the prison, and he committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. Yet to Joseph virtue was its own reward; his reward was not the favor of Potiphar, or of the Keeper of the prison, but the virtue itself, the feeling of satisfaction and self-respect which went with it.

By thine own soul's law, learn to live;
And if men thwart thee, take no heed;
And if men hate thee, have no care —
Sing thou thy song, and do thy deed;
Hope thou thy hope, and pray thy prayer,
And claim no crown they will not give. *Whittier.*

Faithful to "His Majesty, Myself." A man who had adopted a course that was magnanimous and unselfish, and had carried it through at no small cost of effort and self-sacrifice, was met with remonstrances by his friends. "You have done more than duty required of you," they said. "You were not obliged to take up that burden; no one had a right to ask it of you."

"No one did," he answered. "I did it because I should have to live with myself afterward, and I might not be pleasant company if that thing were left undone."

His reason was a strong and valid one. There can scarcely be a more uncomfortable companionship than having to live with a condemning self, and whatever friends or advisors may say, the final judgment rests with our own inner consciousness. Other voices, however consoling, die away, but self, approving or accusing, must be lived with. Life can not take on its full meaning or dignity until we have learned to know and respect the power of that strange regent — the ego, the self. *New Guide.*

The Use of Conscience in Work. Don't think you will never hear from a half-finished job or neglected task. It will never die. It will appear to you at the most unexpected times, in the most embarrassing situations. A single broken thread in a web of cloth is traced back to the girl who neglected her work in the factory, and the amount of damage is deducted from her wages. So your botched jobs, your neglected tasks, will mortify you years hence and keep you from the success you expected.

Many a youth thinks it does not matter much whether he does an errand properly, finishes his problems or completes a sled he has started to make, but years afterward, in manhood, these half-finished tasks of his youth and the habits they formed in his character continually embarrass and humiliate him, tripping him

up and impeding his progress. The shiftlessness of his youth becomes a habit so strong that not even the strength of his matured years can break it.

When a young man applies for a position he is amazed at being rejected because of a loosely-constructed, badly-spelled letter he wrote years before to a member of the firm, never thinking it could affect his future. . . .

I know a man whose accomplishments have been the marvel to all who know him, who in his boyhood made the resolution: "Let every occasion be a great occasion, for you can not tell when fate may be taking your measure for a larger place."

If he was at school, he kept thinking: "I must not skip the hard problems, for they may rise up in my manhood, and testify against my faithfulness as a boy, and may defeat me. I must see an opportunity in every lesson and cultivate a habit of conquering, a habit of thorough faithfulness and accuracy." *Orison Swett Marden,* in *Success.*

Faithfulness in the Spiritual Life. Some power making toward success that would be resistless — who, in all this power-thirsty race, would not eagerly cry out to possess such a gift? "It is talent," says one of the world's wise men. "It is genius," is the assertion of another, "combined with favorable circumstances." "Nay," says the Christ with finality of truth, "it is faithfulness in little things. If thou art faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." . . .

"Greatness in any direction is an accumulation of little faithfulnesses towering into sight of the world. Real accomplishment in any line comes as the coral reefs are built, by the deposit of one tiny cell of fidelity to duty upon another, till thousands of unnoticed fidelities form into visible greatness. An isolated instance of devotion to duty is like a single drop of rain. Days full of such stern fidelities are like a fall of rain, bringing the life to flower and fruitage. . . . Running a life by jerks of effort is a good deal like running a railway engine on a track in which some of the rails are missing here and there. It is all right when the track is good, but destructive accidents will be in evidence when the rails are wanting.

Unfaithful over the little things of the Spiritual life, we find the greater things withheld. . . .

How useless is our pleading for conscious power in prayer, while we are unfaithful in the habit of prayer! A hasty word of morning prayer, a hurried prayer of the wearied lips at night while the mind wanders! Only he who keeps in touch with God has either power or vision.

Absolute fidelity in the performance of all the duties that belong to a Christian — how much rarer it is than it should be! *Sunday School Times.*

III Ingratitude

The Flower of Forgetfulness. The scarlet poppy in the cornfield has a strange way of flowering. At first you see on the top of the stalk a round, green ball. By-and-by this ball splits half open, and you see a red streak between the halves. This red streak expands and at last opens altogether, and forms a round scarlet cup freely exposed to the sunshine. The two green leaves, called the calyx, which closed around it when it was in the bud, fall off and leave the stalk and the flower quite bare. The blossom can now do without them. It needed them when it was young to cherish it and protect it from the weather; but now

it can manage for itself, and therefore it drops them, and you see them lying on the ground at the foot of the stalk, poor, shrunken, withered leaves, while the blossom is flaunting its scarlet glory in the gay sunshine. The poppy, as you all know, is the flower of sleep and forgetfulness, and it acts according to its supposed nature in rejecting and forgetting what was once part of its life, but, having served its purpose, is of no further use. Now is this not a striking picture of the conduct of too many persons? *Hugh Macmillan,* in *The Spring of Day.*

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not. *Shakespeare.*

Thoughtlessness is at the Root of Thanklessness. *Thank* and *thought* are closely allied philologically: the Anglo-Saxon word *panc* having both meanings. Thanklessness is the natural result of thoughtlessness. He who is careless and heedless, who takes favors as a matter of course, is always ungrateful. This definition of gratitude, written by a deaf mute, could not be improved—"Gratitude is the memory of the heart." The one who says he can not express his gratitude as others do, or who thinks he has not many causes for gratitude, needs only to bear in mind that "rubbing will set dry sticks on fire, and certainly heart-fibers will do as much under friction of purposeful remembrance."

Two Pictures. Painters give a dark background to the most luminous pictures. Never is a shining figure brighter than against a shadowy background. So I would offer as a background to the clear face of a thankful mind the dark abyss of ingratitude. All the good, the lovely, and the helpful, all the work of sacrifice in the world, may be cast into this abyss without changing its aspect, without lessening its depth. As the ocean shows not the paths of crossing ships, so the mind of an ungrateful man bears no sign of gifts received. Ingratitude not only swallows up the goodness of a man's fellows, but forgets the goodness of God Himself. Therefore we represent that ugly vice dark as a hopeless night, dark as a covered grave. In this darkness gratitude rises like a star. Gratitude is the pure reflection of love in this world. Love is a beautiful mother, and one of her most delightful children is gratitude. *Charles Wagner.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Hold by the right, you double your might. *Browning.*

All experience goes to show
No mud can soil, but the mud we throw. *Lowell.*

To persevere in one's duty and to be silent is the first answer to calumny. *Washington.*

Little things are little things, but faithfulness in little things is something great. *St. Augustine.*

To feel gratitude without showing it is perhaps no better than to show gratitude without feeling it. *Ivan Panin.*

A man can bear
A world's contempt, when he has that within
Which says he's worthy. *Alexander Smith.*

When I devoted to God my ease, my time, my fortune, my life, I did not except my reputation. *John Wesley.*

Many favors which God giveth us ravel out for want of hemming — through our unthankfulness. *Thomas Fuller.*

He who receives a good turn should never forget it: he who does one should never remember it. *Charron.*

"God's ways seem dark; but soon or late,
They touch the shining hills of day;
The evil can not brook delay,
The good can well afford to wait."

He who stays his mind on his ever-present, ever-energetic God, will not fret himself because of evil-doers. *David Livingstone.*

Forenoon, and afternoon and night,— Forenoon,
And afternoon, and night,—
Forenoon, and — what!
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is life: make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And time is conquered, and thy crown is won.

Edward Rowland Sill.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity. Job. 31 .6.

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by the wall; whose branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. Gen. 49 .22–24.

Joseph was sold for a servant, whose foot they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him. Psa. 105 .17–19.

Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. 15 .58.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and magnify him with thanksgiving. Psa. 69 .30.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Life is a dream, a riddle, a mystery, a difficult problem. But there is one Interpreter. What is His name? Where can He be found? His name is Jesus Christ, and He can be found wherever there is a heart that wants Him. *Joseph Parker.*

THE LESSON STORY

The Ishmaelite traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers, and in the household Joseph proved so faithful a slave and so successful a manager, that he was advanced to the position of overseer. "His master saw that the

Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Perhaps he would have lived and died a slave had not a false charge been brought against him which resulted in his being put in a prison where the King's prisoners were kept. The Keeper of the Prison committed to Joseph's care all the other prisoners. And it came to pass that the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharaoh were brought to the prison, and Joseph served them. Three days before Pharaoh's birthday, a day on which pardons were often granted, these court officials dreamed each a dream, which no one could interpret. The chief butler dreamed that he beheld a vine with three branches bud and blossom and bear ripe grapes, from which he pressed the juice into a cup and carried it to Pharaoh. Joseph told them that through God's help he could interpret dreams; the butler's dream signified that within three days he would be restored to his former position. Joseph besought the butler when at court to remember him, and make mention of his case to Pharaoh, for he was being wrongfully kept in prison.

The chief baker dreamed that he held three baskets on his head, and birds came and devoured the bakemeats in the top basket. Joseph's interpretation was that within three days the chief baker would be hanged and the birds would eat his flesh. Joseph's prophecies came to pass, but the chief butler "did not remember Joseph, but forgot him." Yet his faithfulness was later rewarded. "Faithful — faith in God, fidelity to God — it means both," says Doctor Babcock; "faithful to-day, faithful to-morrow, will mean faithful unto death — and that will mean a crown of life."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Make all men equal in rank to-day, and to-morrow there will be found those who have acquired influence over the others. *F. W. Robertson.*

2. The value of the Old Testament in modern life. There is in the Old Testament such a singular graphicness, such a variety of human situations and experiences, so much pathos and joy and sorrow all irradiated with the hues of religion, such a powerful sense of God, such a practical assurance of His presence and power and sympathy and enlightenment, and such a broad hope in Him as having a gracious purpose towards the world and men, which amidst all present confusions He is working out, and will yet make clearly to appear — in a word, such a religious reality that the Church has at all times found in it great quickening to their faith and sustenance to their religious life. *A. B. Davidson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. During how many years was Joseph in Egypt as a slave and a prisoner before his elevation by Pharaoh? (See Gen. 37.2 and 41.46.) 2. Tell Pharaoh's dream and its interpretation. (Gen. 41.1–32.) 3. Compare Nebuchadnezzar's words to Daniel in Dan. 5.14, with Pharaoh's words to Joseph in verse 38. 4. What did the giving of a ring to Haman and then to Mordecai by King Ahasuerus signify? (Est. 3.10; 8.2.) 5. With the phrase "stood before Pharaoh" compare Deut. 1.38; 1 Kings 12.6. 6. What traits of character are shown by Joseph in the next lesson? 7. Read Psa. 105.16–22.

JOSEPH THE WISE RULER IN EGYPT

Gen. 41 .38–49. (Read Gen. 41–43.) Commit vv. 38–40.

Golden Text

If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God. James 1 .5.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 41 .38–49.

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find *such a one* as this *is,* a man in whom the Spirit of God *is?*
39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, *there* is none so discreet and wise as thou *art;*
40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word, shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.
41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.
42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;
43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him *ruler* over all the land of Egypt.
44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I *am* Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.
45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.
46 And Joseph *was* thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.
47 And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.
48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which *was* round about every city, laid he up in the same.
49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for *it was* without number.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

39. *Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art.* His wisdom is the gift of God, hence he is a man "in whom the Spirit of God is."

40. *Over my house.* Over my palace. "The title, in later times, of an influential minister in the courts of Judah and Israel (1 Kings 4 .6)."

42. *Ring.* R. V., *signet ring.* The ring was used to seal the royal documents, and the "keeper of the seal" was the king's deputy. The ring transferred royal authority. *Vestures of fine linen.* Priestly garments by which Joseph is here distinguished, might not be of woolen, but might be either of cotton or linen. *Delitzsch.* To make a present of official robes indicated investiture with office.

Joseph and Pharaoh

Gold chain. "A peculiar Egyptian form of decoration for services to the crown."

44. *I am Pharaoh.* I am the king, and I declare that nothing shall be done without thy consent.

45. *Zaphnath-paaneah.* The meaning of this word is uncertain. "Egyptologists are now agreed," says Driver, "that it means 'God (or, the God) spoke, and he (the bearer of the name) came into life.'" *Asenath.* "Belonging to Neith"—the Egyptian Minerva. *Poti-pherah.* "Belonging to the Sun." *On* seems to have been identical with the Syrian Baal—the sun-god. *Porter.*

46. *Stood before Pharaoh.* Admitted into his presence as his prime minister.

49. *Corn.* R. V., *grain.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

38. *Pharaoh.* There are strong reasons for supposing Rameses II, of the 19th dynasty (B. C. 1348–1281) to be the Pharaoh of the oppression; and reckoning back from this datum, it is probable that Joseph's elevation in Egypt is to be placed under that of the later Hyksos Kings. The Hyksos were a race of Asiatic invaders, who, according, to Manetho, held Egypt for five hundred and eleven years, at first devastating and destroying, but afterwards settling down, and assimilating much of the culture of the conquered Egyptians. They were finally expelled c. 1600 B. C. or c. 1750 B. C. The capital of the Hyksos, as excavations have shown, was Zoan (Tanis) in the northeast of the Delta, about thirty-five miles north of Goshen; and it is true that the court of the Pharaoh is represented in Genesis as being not far from Goshen. *S. R. Driver.*

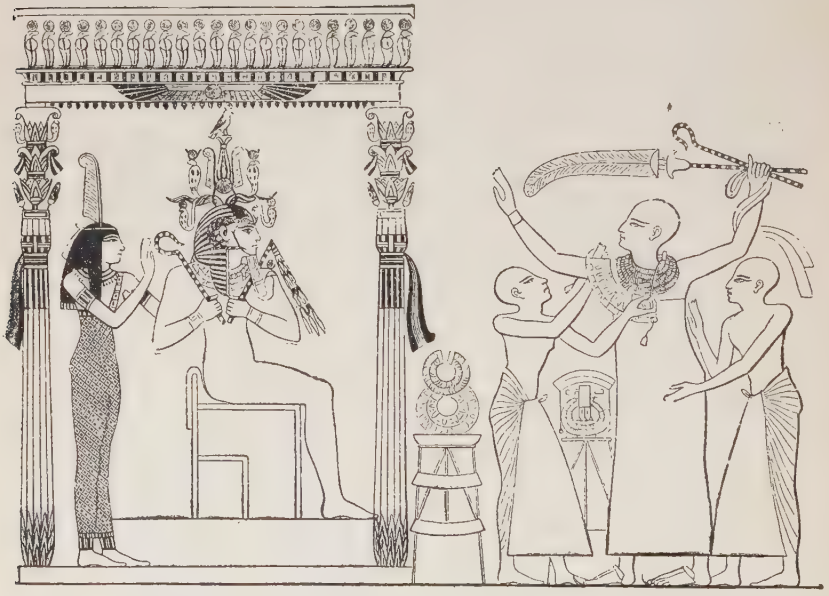
45. *The daughter of the priest of On.* In order to give him a position among the highest nobles of the land, Pharaoh "gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On," that is, the chief priest of "the City of the Sun." This is the more noteworthy as the chief of the priesthood was generally chosen from among the nearest relatives of the Pharaoh. Yet in all this story there is really nothing extraordinary. As Egypt depends for its produce entirely on the waters of the Nile, the country has at all times been exposed to terrible famines; and one which lasted exactly seven years is recorded in A. D. 1064–1071, the horrors of which show us the wisdom of Joseph's precautionary measures. Again, so far as the sudden elevation of Joseph is concerned, Eastern history contains many such instances, and indeed, a Greek historian tells us of an Egyptian king who made the son of a mason his own son-in-law, because he judged him the cleverest man in the land. What is remarkable is the marvelous divine appointment in all this, and the equally marvelous choice of means to bring it about. *Edersheim,* in *History of Palestine.*

47. *In the seven plenteous years.* On the Nile for one thousand miles no stream runs into it, but far away God has provided water in large basins or lakes. Now, the outlets from these lakes sometimes get blocked up with vegetable growth, so that hardly any water comes down perhaps for several years; and sometimes this growth is so solid that elephants can walk over it without making any impression. More than one disaster has been caused by floods when the water breaks out over or through the growth that has obstructed it. The English engineers who have made the great dam at Assiout are working hard to obviate these difficulties, and are setting vessels to work to cut this growth away. Of course, their dam at Assiout would be of very little use if there were no water coming down the river. *G. Frederick Wright,* in *New York Witness.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

39. *There is no one so wise as thou art.* It was no light matter for one outside the priestly caste to venture to interpret a dream, much less that of the Pharaoh; for a slave who busied himself with the secret knowledge reserved by the hierarchy of priests to themselves, was liable to death. It must, therefore, have been an anxious moment for Joseph, when he waited to see how his interpretation was received; but its correctness was so instantly apparent, that the result was not for a moment doubtful. *Geikie,* in *Hours with the Bible.*

42. *His signet-ring.* Joseph would get the king's secretaries to write any decree he might like to dictate, would then rub ink with his finger on the seal, press it on the papyrus roll, and it was a decree. Such is the custom to-day. My permit to enter the convent of Mount Sinai was "sealed" in exactly the same manner. *Henry G. Harper,* in *The Bible and Modern Discoveries.*



Investiture of an Egyptian Official. According to Wilkinson

42. *Vestures of fine linen.* So perfect was Egyptian linen, that a piece found at Thebes has one hundred and fifty-two threads in the warp, seventy-one in the woof, to each inch. A piece from Memphis is as fine again; this is also covered with hieroglyphics so finely drawn that the lines are with difficulty followed by the eye. When held up to the light — an ancient way of proving fine cloth — no knots or breaks — as seen in our best cambric — are to be found. *Henry A. Harper.*

A gold chain. Nothing is more remarkable than the knowledge the ancients had of gold, and how to work it. At Beni Hassan in the early tombs there are repersentations of goldsmiths: one with a blowpipe is blowing a fire for melting the gold; others are making rings; it is being weighed, a scribe is writing down

its value; gold is being washed; while walking about is the superintendent directing the workmen. *Henry A. Harper.*

45. *The priest of On.* The worship of the sun was the most ancient form of the Egyptian religion. Joseph, the husband of the priest of the sun's daughter, has now become an Egyptian to the Egyptians, the favorite son of Jacob a ruler of the heathen; he is admitted into the priestly caste, to which the kings of Egypt also belonged, or into which they had to be admitted, if descended from the military caste. *Delitzsch.*

"Cleopatra's Needle" was originally one of the numerous obelisks erected in front of the great temple of Ra at On by Thothmes III (1503–1449 B. C.) The monuments supply many illustrations, at least in and after the 18th dynasty, of foreigners, one including slaves from Syria, rising to positions of political importance in Egypt, and adopting then a changed name. *S. R. Driver.*

49. *He laid up the food.* Granaries were often very extensive in Egypt. The monuments have many illustrations of the different styles of store-houses that were used, by which we can obtain some idea of the manner in which the ancient Egyptians received and delivered their grain. Some of these store-houses were evidently low flat-roofed buildings, divided into rooms or vaults, into which the grain was poured from bags. *Freeman, Handbook of Bible Manners.*

Overseer Superintending the Filling of a Store-house

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Land of Egypt, paragraphs 32–35; Zoan, paragraph 48; On, paragraph 47.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The story of Joseph is full of thrilling interest to young pupils. No better introduction to the lesson for to-day can be given than the account of Pharaoh's dream and Joseph's explanation.

For Older Pupils. Sir William Willcocks, formerly director-general of the reservoirs of Egypt, in a lecture on the subject of the Assuan Dam, gave an interesting theory of his own to explain the cause of the long famine in Egypt. "There was in ancient days," he tells us, "a huge lake in Egypt — Lake Moeris (probably Pa-zetku; the name Moeris was given to the lake by the kings a thousand years afterwards), whose waters, held in thrall by a great dyke, were allowed to flood Upper and Lower Egypt in due season. At the head of this dyke was Ha-Uar (probably Hawara), a fortified island. The Hyksos ruled Lower Egypt, while Theban dynasties ruled Upper Egypt. Between the two there was unending war.

"Joseph, a thoroughly capable and shrewd man, as well as a God-fearing one,

while lying in prison for many years, would have learned from his fellow prisoners, many of them captives from Upper Egypt, that the aim of the Theban kings was the construction of a fleet and the capture of Ha-Uar. He took in the situation, and when he stood before Pharaoh boldly told the king to put away his flattering advisers and to realize the fact that Upper Egypt was preparing a strong fleet, and that when it was ready Ha-Uar might fall.

"The collection of corn was set on foot on a gigantic scale. Ha-Uar fell into the hands of the Theban kings; the Nile failed to overflow its banks in Lower Egypt. The predicted famine came.

"Making a final effort, the Hyksos king retook Ha-Uar, and closed the dyke The Nile flood rose to its ordinary level, and the land which had long lain fallow brought forth by handfuls."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I A Man in whom the Spirit of God is

Pharaoh's Opinion of Joseph. "It is a true discrimination that recognizes the presence of God in men," says Phillips Brooks, "the saints that are in the world, not by the miracles they work, but by the miracles they are, by the way in which they bring the grace of God to bear on the simple duties of the household and the street."

May we not suppose that, while waiting for Joseph to come to the palace and make himself presentable to the Pharaoh, for he was obliged to shave and change his prison raiment (41 .14), the chief butler told Pharaoh about Joseph's integrity and fidelity in his prison life? Perhaps before Joseph appeared Pharaoh's opinion of him was like Scott's opinion of Roderick—

"One blast upon his bugle horn
Was worth a thousand men."

When Adoniram Judson was a missionary in Burmah, the natives called him "Jesus Christ's man." Joseph's life in Potiphar's household, and then in prison, had shown him to be God's man. When he explained Pharaoh's dream and gave such sound counsel, Pharaoh could not fail to see that he had been guided in all this by God Himself.

An Explanation of Moody's Wonderful Success. For thirty years men have been studying D. L. Moody to find what was the secret of his power. Some thought they could account for his power by his earnest, fervent, passionate spirit, but the world has come to know that his power was in his character. It was goodness and sincerity and love glowing and throbbing in thought, and word, and act, that made D. L. Moody the power that he was. This is supreme power—a character indwelt with the divine Presence and radiant with the divine Holiness.

Jesus Christ is at once the ideal and the inspiration of such a character. Our ability to realize the ideal is dependent upon the inspiration of the indwelling Christ. . . . What we need is to have the same divine Spirit working at the core of our lives that worked at the core of His. Let Christ dwell in your heart, and so touch with His divine Presence all the forces of your being, that your character will become radiant with the beauty of His purity, and love, and kindness. *John F. Carson*, in *Current Anecdotes.*

One kept Alive. The monkish chronicles of the early ages of Chris-

tianity wrapped the truths, which they wished to teach, in quaint allegories to attract their heathen readers. One of these fables is as true in significance as it was in the days of the Cæsars.

A flock of birds mysteriously appeared one day in a city out of a clear sky, and sought refuge in all manner of strange hiding-places.

One flew into a bare stone cell, where it died of starvation; another into the gaping throat of a wild boar, and was stifled by fat; a third was placed by a princess in a beautiful cage. At first she counted the bird as her chief treasure and fed and cherished it. Then she began to decorate the cage with gold and jewels, and forgot its inmate, until one day she found it starved and dead.

But another took refuge in the breast of a woman so poor that she had only rags to keep her warm and crusts to eat. The bird was her only happiness.

When the winter night came, a call sounded from the sky for the birds to return. There was but one of them yet living. It flew from the breast of a poor woman who lay frozen to death by the roadside, and Heaven opened to take it in.

The allegory needs no interpretation.

As we walk along the street to-day and look into the faces of the passers-by, we can read the story of the bird from Heaven which was given to each one of them at birth. In that man's breast it died of cold; in this it was stifled by swinish appetites; that woman's body is a beautiful cage, which she so loves to adorn that she altogether forgets its holy tenant. But there are men and women who meet us every day, whose every word and action are fragments of harmony, from the divine Dweller in their hearts. *Youth's Companion.*

II Be a Friend to Yourself and Others will

Be a Friend to Yourself. "Be a friend to yourself and others will," is an old proverb which we have seen proved true in Joseph's case. His exaltation to a position in the Egyptian realm, second only to that of the Pharaoh himself, would never have been brought about had he not been a friend to himself.

"Self-revelation, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone, lead life to sovereign power,"

sings Tennyson.

As a lad we see Joseph firm in the conviction that he is born to greatness and power. His dreams tell us this and while perhaps they sound to us, as they did to his father, somewhat presumptuous, yet we know that it was natural in those days to attribute great importance to dreams and to talk about them to others. "Self-respect is the early form in which greatness appears," says Emerson; "it is our practical perception of the Deity in man." Plainly it was Joseph's perception of God's image in his soul that gave him that self-respect which was mirrored in his dreams; and just as plainly was this self-respect an earnest of his future greatness.

"By all means use some time to be alone;
Salute thyself, see that thy soul doth wear;"

is George Herbert's advice. When Thales, the father of philosophy, uttered the same thought in his maxim 'Know thyself," the ancient Greeks thought it so divine that they said it fell from Heaven.

Self-conceit comes from the lack of self-knowledge; from imagining that one

has really something to be vain about; self-respect comes from actual self-knowledge, from a perception of the Deity in one, and a determination to make that element of one's soul prominent. From self-respect all high endeavor springs.

Be the Right Kind of Friend to Yourself. Edward Emerson tells of a young lecturer who obtained a note of introduction to the sage of Concord. After being received courteously by Mr. Emerson the young man talked for some time about himself and his work, and about the various noted men who had endorsed him, and finally requested Mr. Emerson himself to give him a recommendation. "My young friend," said Mr. Emerson, "do you not know that there is but one person who can recommend you?" "Who is that, sir?" asked the puzzled man. "Yourself," was the grave reply.

Daniel recommended himself to Nebuchadnezzar, not by boasting of what he could do, but by loyalty to his ideal of righteousness, and the king exalted him to a position of the highest trust.

Being a Friend to Yourself brings the Friendship of God. When God was going to give a message to Ezekiel, He said to him, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak unto thee." Not on his face but on his feet; not in the attitude of humiliation, but in the attitude of self-respect; not stripped of all strength and lying like a dead man waiting for life to be given him, but strong in the intelligent consciousness of privilege, and standing alive, ready to coöperate with the living God who spoke to him; so the man now is to receive the word of God. Was this not a declaration of the truth that man might lose the words of God because of a low and groveling estimate of himself, as well as because of a conceited one? The best understanding of God could come to man only when man is upright and self-reverent in his privilege as the child of God.

The other truth is often urged upon us; that if we are proud we shall be ignorant; if we do not listen humbly we shall listen in vain to hear the divine voice of which the world is full. We are pointed continually to men on every side who have evidently no wisdom but their own, because they have never deeply felt that they needed any other, and who, therefore, are filling the land with their foolishness. But this other truth is not so generally felt; unless you honor your life you can not get God's best and fullest wisdom; unless you stand upon your feet you will not hear God speak to you. *Phillips Brooks.*

III Foresight

Foresight is Wise. Joseph set an example of wise forethought. While trusting in God, we should use provident economy, not forgetting in days of prosperity that darker days will come. When Christ counseled to "take no thought for the morrow," the word as used meant "anxious thought"; He did not mean that we should not use wise foresight, but that our trust in God's help should be so great that we would not be over anxious about what the morrow might bring forth. "Forethought is very wise, but foresorrow is very foolish," says Sir John Lubbock. The faculty of anticipation has been given us that we may look ahead to future certainties and be ready for their coming.

The miraculous element in many miracles is the divine foresight which knows that certain natural things are to occur and brings other things to pass at just the right moment. A marvelous thing about the crossing of the Red Sea is that

the Israelites were there just when a passageway was opened, and their enemies came just when the waters returned.

Historic Examples of Foresight. It has been rightly said that Von Moltke won his great battles at Mars la Tour and at Sedan years before they were fought. The probability of the war with France he had foreseen, and the preparations for it he had most carefully made. His famous blue book held a carefully indexed account of the topography of the country, of the roads and streams and bridges, as well as all necessary information about the enemy.

With equal truthfulness we might say that the Japanese won their marvelous victories years before they began their contest with the Russians. "Japan will be wiped off the map of the world," prophesied many, at the beginning of the unequal contest, but the inequality was on the side of the Russians because they had never believed in the possibility of so small a nation attempting to cope with their hundred and forty million people, while the Japanese had long realized that such a contest was inevitable, and had been preparing for it in secret.

Foresight in Nature. Nature is all the time at work making ready for the new season, while in the midst of the old. "Cut open the terminal hickory buds," says John Burroughs, "in the late fall, and you will find the new growth of the coming season all snugly packed away there, many times folded up and wrapped about by protecting scales. The eggs that hold the coming crop of insect life are mostly laid in the late summer or early fall, and an analogous start is made in the vegetable world."

The man who looks ahead and prepares for the future simply carries out a principle that is inherent in nature and in human life. *B. R. Patrick.*

Providence and Foresight. The vegetables God did not create till the earth was dry, the animals not till the vegetables were prepared for their sustenance; and man not till the kingdom was put in order which man should rule. Now this is what we call providence in God, foresight or prudence in man. *F. W. Robertson.*

Forethought in Religious Activities. If we build a house we try to ascertain its cost and advantages. But we will push ahead in spiritual things, concerning ourselves and others, without pausing to consider, to equip ourselves, to determine wisely what we ought to do and what we ought to be. On the writing of a book, on the shaping of a statue, we will bestow infinite pains and meditation; but we will essay to write our own lives and shape the destiny of others without the least hesitancy. In the higher things we seem to feel competent to speak without instruction. Where it is most difficult to know we are most assured. *George C. Lorimer.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The spirited life belongs to the spiritual man. *Sunday School Times.*

He that respects himself is safe from others;
He wears a coat of mail that none can pierce. *Longfellow.*

Have you not learned, did you not learn very early, that exaltation and abasement do not stand far apart in your life? *Phillips Brooks.*

It is curious to see how the space clears around a man of decisive spirit and leaves him room and freedom. *John Foster.*

Greatness is self-conscious, not in the ordinary sense of that phrase, but in the sense that denotes consciousness of its possession. *William E. Simonds.*

It is not the man who reaches the corner first who wins, but the man who knows exactly what he is going to do when he reaches the corner. *Charles E. Hughes.*

Few men have any next: they live from hand to mouth, they are without plan, and soon come to the end of their line. *Emerson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge. Ex. 31.3.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke. Phil. 2.13–15.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. 3.16.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Eccl. 9.10.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Of many a character in the Bible we say at some period of his life history; "I expected better things of him — I am disappointed in him," but we are nowhere disappointed in Joseph, he is the same righteous, faithful, hopeful, helpful, trustful man alike in his bitter bondage and in his exalted position. The Spirit of God in him was never obscured. He never failed when tested. Can this be said of us? Are we noble when things go well with us, and ignoble when things go ill? Do we ever disappoint God?

THE LESSON STORY

For two long years Joseph was left in prison. Then Pharaoh had a startling dream which seemed to him of great significance, and no one could interpret it. This recalled Joseph to the mind of the chief butler and he "made mention of him to Pharaoh" thus tardily. Joseph was brought to the palace and told Pharaoh's dream about the seven lean kine which devoured the seven fat kine, and the seven withered ears of corn which devoured the seven full ears. Disclaiming all knowledge himself, and attributing his skill in interpreting dreams to God, Joseph explained that seven years of famine were to follow seven years of plenty in Egypt, and counseled Pharaoh to choose a wise man to store away food in the plenteous years that there might be a sufficient supply for the years of famine.

The interpretation and counsel seemed good to Pharaoh, and he at once appointed Joseph himself as the wisest man, one in whom the Spirit of God was, to execute the policy he had advised. With the suddenness possible only in a despotic country, Joseph found himself exalted to a position second only to that of Pharaoh himself. He had dreamed of receiving homage, and now to him all the people "bowed the knee." Social rank was necessary for him in his new position; and he was married into an Egyptian family of the highest standing, his wife being the daughter of the priest of On. Two sons were born to them who became later the heads of two tribes of Israel, Manasseh and Ephraim. The seven years of plenty passed, during which Joseph stored away the corn

"as the sand of the sea," and seven years of famine came, when all countries round about came to him for it.

From the Prison to the Throne might be the title of this strange story. Through it all two truths are plainly revealed, that God was with Joseph, and that his exaltation came to him as a result of his fidelity.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Were all the measures adopted by Joseph in regard to the Egyptians, Gen. 41.48, 55, 56; 47.14–26, right and just?

The economic conditions of Egypt are, and always have been, peculiar. The fertility of the soil is dependent upon a system of irrigation, which can only be kept in proper order by the central government; and the cultivator falls into a state of dependency and indebtedness to it at the same time. Moreover, the Egyptian fellah lacks inherently the spirit of independence, and even to the present day, is content to enrich others by his labor rather than himself. Of course such considerations as these do not justify in the abstract the oppressions to which Egypt has habitually been exposed at the hands of oriental viceroys and pashas; but they tend to show that Joseph did not do more than was consistent with the condition of the country, with the age in which he lived, and with the position in which he found himself placed at the time. *S. R. Driver,* in *Book of Genesis.*

2. The religious society which prepares for itself a sphere larger than it can manage, and then has the effrontery to tell us that such imprudence is Christian faith and zeal instead of neglect, has sinned against not merely common forethought but divine law. *F. W. Robertson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Was it strange that Joseph's brethren did not know him? 2. How many times had Joseph asked before this if his father were living? Why does he repeat the question now? 3. With the phrase, a father to Pharaoh, compare Is. 22.21, and Job 29.16. 4. What is implied in the question, "Am I in the place of God?" (See 1 Sam. 26.8–10; Prov. 20.22; Rom. 12.19.) 5. Make a list of Joseph's words acknowledging that God directed all things. (Gen. 40.8; 41.16, 25, 28, 32, 51, 52; 45.5, 7, 8, 9; 50.20, 24.) 6. What reason had Joseph's brothers for fearing he would avenge the wrong they had done him? (Only the knowledge that in his place they would do this.) 7. How did Jesus answer Peter's question as to the number of times one should forgive? (Matt. 18.21, 22.) 8. What parable of Jesus shows the duty of forgiveness? (Matt. 18.23–35.) 9. How did Stephen forgive his enemies? (Acts 7.60.) What supreme example of a forgiving spirit did Jesus show? (Luke 23.34.) 10. Write in your own words the account of Joseph's dealings with his brothers in Egypt.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Jacob's brothers come from Canaan for corn, and do not recognize him in the ruler of Egypt. Jacob tries their loyalty to their father and to Benjamin by severe tests, and they prove that they are changed men.

JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS

Gen. 45.1–15; 50.15–21. (Read Gen. 44–50.) Commit vv. 4, 5.

Golden Text

Be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. 4.32.

LESSON TEXT Genesis 45.1–15; 50.15–21.

1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I *am* Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* earing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet *there are* five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him. . . .

15 And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we *be* thy servants.

JOSEPH MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN—*Doré*

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God?
20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.
21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Could not refrain himself.* Could not refrain from weeping, could no longer keep from making himself known.

3. *Doth my father yet live?* He had been told several times that his father lived, but he felt the need of hearing again the reassuring words.

6. *Earing.* R. V., *ploughing.*

7. *A posterity.* R. V., *a remnant. To save your lives by a great deliverance.* R. V. margin, *to be a great company that escape.*

8. *A father to Pharaoh.* Compare Isa. 22.21, "He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." His position was that of counselor and administrator.

12. *It is my mouth that speaketh unto you.* He spoke to them in Hebrew, not through an interpreter as in 42.23.

50.15. *Joseph will peradventure hate us.* R. V., *it may be that Joseph will hate us. Certainly.* R. V., *fully.*

16. *Messenger.* R. V., *message.*

17. *Trespass.* R. V., *transgression. Joseph wept.* Probably because his brothers so misunderstood him.

19. *Am I in the place of God?* How should I take any further notice of your transgressions? I have passed it by, the matter lies now between God and you. *Clarke.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves.* Few things are more touching in this story than the considerate delicacy with which Joseph leads them to understand that he cherishes against them not the least resentment. Scarcely has he made the startling disclosure that he is Joseph, than, as if to prevent them from thinking of their sin, he hurries on to ask them about their father. Then, as he sees them shrinking in alarm from his presence, expecting, doubtless, that the hour of recompense for Dothan had arrived, he kindly asks them not to stand aloof from him, but to come near. Again, as he understands the impossibility of their ever shutting their eyes to their deplorable wickedness, he tries to lead them rather to contemplate the wonderful way in which the hand of God had overruled his captivity for the salvation of their entire household. "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God." *Thomas Whitelaw.*

8. *It was not you that sent me hither, but God.* Even a French moralist has said, "I do not know what hidden force it is that seems to delight in breaking up human plans just at the moment when they promise to turn out well." Yes, there is a "hidden Power," ever watchful, ever balancing human actions, ever ordaining, either in this world or the next, the just meed of praise or blame, of retribution or reward. See how the scribes and Pharisees held councils against Jesus and sought how they might kill Him. They succeeded at length in nailing

Him to the cross. They carried out their evil intentions; but that cross became the throne of the Saviour's power, the salvation; and the death of Christ became the life of the world.

That God overrules evil is no license to do evil. Many would say, "Let us do evil that good may come." They would say, "Sin is not so great an evil, since God can overrule it." To talk like this would be like a youth who, seeing a gardener pruning trees, should take a knife and cut and slash all the trees. *F. Hastings.*

9. *God hath made me Lord of all Egypt.* A very beautiful speech is this which Joseph made concerning his father. "Say unto him, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; therefore the bond between us is cut. Say to him, I disown my relationship to a shepherd; a man living in the bush, keeping flocks and herds, and wandering about from place to place. Say I am lord of all Egypt, and to come within the circle of my influence is to be blinded and dazzled by my glory." What a chivalrous, filial, beautiful speech! But, fortunately, we have put that speech within Joseph's mouth. Yet how well it would come after the introduction; "Say unto him, I am lord over all Egypt." But that is not the message. You would say, you who had not read it, but only heard it, "It sounded very like that." So it did, but it was wholly different from that. The speech reads: "Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt." It is the word *God* that saves the speech, that makes it musical, that gives it high tone, and noble bearing, profound and gentle meaning. *Joseph Parker.*

Whatever good there is in us, or is done by us, at any time, it must be ascribed to the grace of God: if the heart bend at any time the right way, it is because He has touched it. *Matthew Henry.*

13. *Ye shall make haste and bring down my father hither.* And so these wandering clans, these tribes that were the nomads of the desert, who after three hundred years had not taken a step in advance, were by this strange route, this romantic history, brought down into Egypt to receive, through the next four hundred years, the rudiments of that knowledge by which they were to become a nation to which the whole civilized world is indebted for its best laws, its noblest morality, its sweet domestic affections, and its profoundest aspirations! *Henry Ward Beecher.*

16. *Thy father did command before he died.* Their father recognized the duty of apology. For Jacob knew that Joseph bore no malice. Not to change Joseph, but to fulfil their obligations, he gave the charge that required satisfaction. *F. W. Robertson.*

17. *Joseph wept when they spake unto him.* No wonder Joseph wept when he received their message. He wept because he saw that he was still misunderstood and distrusted by his brothers; because he felt, too, that had they been more generous men themselves, they would more easily have believed in his forgiveness; and because his pity was stirred for these men, who recognized that they were so completely in the power of their younger brother. Joseph had passed through severe conflicts of feeling about them, had been at great expense both of emotion and of outward good on their account, had risked his position in order to be able to serve them, and here is his reward! They supposed he had been but biding his time; that his apparent forgetfulness of their injury had been the crafty restraint of a deep-seated resentment; or, at least, that he had been unconsciously influenced by regard for his father, and now, when that influence was removed, the helpless condition of his brethren might tempt him

to retaliate. This exhibition of a craven and suspicious spirit is unexpected, and must have been profoundly saddening to Joseph. *Marcus Dods.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *He wept aloud.* The Oriental, unlike the Occidental, is not ashamed of showing his emotions, and he does not think it necessary to repress his feelings.

8. *A father to Pharaoh.* Among the Phœnicians, Persians, Arabians, and Romans the title of Father was given to certain officers of state. The Roman emperor gave the name of Father to the prefects of the Prætorium, the caliphs gave the name to their prime ministers. *Adam Clarke.*

9. *Come down unto me.* "The Oriental is not afraid to go far, if he has not to cross the sea; for, once uprooted, distance makes little difference to him. He has no furniture to carry, for, except a carpet and a few brass pans, he has none. He has no trouble about meals, for he is content with parched grain, which his wife can cook anywhere, or dried dates, or dried flesh, or anything obtainable which will keep. He is, on a march, careless where he sleeps — in a stable, under a porch, in the open air. He never changes his clothes at night, and he is profoundly indifferent to everything that the Western man understands by comfort."

10. *Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen.* Though amongst the Hebrews it was ever an honorable occupation to feed sheep, yet "shepherds were an abomination unto the Egyptians." (Gen. 46.34.) Wilkinson remarks, on the different classes into which Egyptian society was divided, that the Egyptian aristocracy looked upon those who attended cattle as following a disgraceful employment. That would be the reason why Jacob recommended Goshen, because they then would avoid the native Egyptians, as well as get good land for pasturing; probably, too, as we see from the text, Pharaoh's cattle were kept there. The region named is still the best land for grazing. Then, too, we must remember that the native Egyptians had good reason to hate "shepherds," for the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, had conquered their lands. In Upper Egypt, which was at this time held by native Egyptians, all the inscriptions delight in caricaturing the appearance of shepherds. *Henry A. Harper,* in *The Bible and Modern Discoveries.*

14. *He fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck.* Among the Asiatics kissing the hand, the neck, and the shoulders, is in use to the present day; and probably falling on the neck signifies no more than kissing the neck and shoulders, with the arms around. *Adam Clarke.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Egypt, paragraphs 36–38; Goshen, paragraph 43; Machpelah, paragraph 145.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Briefly review last Sunday's lesson, then tell the story of chapters 52, 53, and 54.

For Older Pupils. After the siege of Peking, the French minister there published a report showing that there were ten crises during the siege when the fate of all the foreigners depended on seemingly trifling decisions of various

men. That their lives were spared was what we are wont to call a special providence, and yet do we not believe with George Macdonald, who says that he believes in the providences but not in the special providences?

"O, how wondrous a thing is a life that is shaped by God, and consciously lived in His mysterious will!" exclaims Horace Bushnell. "Take, for example, such a history as that of Cromwell, enveloped in his own right wholly in God's counsel, rolled on over the heads of precedent, over Church and Parliament, like a chariot of wrath sent from God — how great a mystery is such a man to himself, a wonderful work of God."

No one can read the story of Joseph without being impressed by the way in which he realized the guiding hand of God in all his life's course.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I A Forgiving Spirit

The Difficulty of forgiving Oneself. What a contrast there is between Joseph's free and full forgiveness of his brothers, and his brothers' tardy and partial forgiveness of themselves. When Joseph, in order to prove them, had accused them of being spies, they said to one another: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." (Gen. 42.21.) There was no connection between their guilt and this distress; it was their consciences which condemned them and made them see in these events cause and effect. After their father's death, despite all Joseph's kindness to them, they said, "Joseph will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him."

Schiller has a beautiful ballad in which he has told the classic story of the cranes of Ibykus. Two robbers murder Ibykus, a poet, on his way to the national games at Corinth. In the act of committing the crime they see a flock of cranes flying overhead. The murderers are safe in the immense crowd assembled at Corinth for the games. The next day, however, while seated in an open theater, one of them looks up and sees the cranes in the sky, and cries out in horror: "Look, look there, Timotheus, the cranes of Ibykus!" "Of Ibykus!" The beloved poet's name draws the attention of the crowd to him and his companion, and their terrified looks complete the proof of their guilt.

Doctor Joseph Parker tells the experience of a forger in these words: "I forged that name twenty-five years ago, and oh, every piece of paper I get hold of seems to have the name upon it! I never dip the pen, but there is something in the pen that reminds me of what I did by candle light in almost darkness, when I had locked the door and assured myself nobody was there. Yet it comes upon me so graphically — my punishment is greater than I can bear!" Time can not heal our iniquities. Forgetfulness is not the cure of all sin.

Be reconciled to thy Brother quickly. From a recent book of travels, *The Jordan Valley and Petra,* by Libby and Hoskins, comes this account of the burial of a Moslem sheik at Banias. When the grave was filled and a row of stones placed around it, the sheiks arose and one of them began an invocation to the angels of death, Munkar and Nakir, who are supposed to take charge of the newly buried Moslem. They prayed God to be with the dead man when examined by those emissaries and enable him to answer as a good Moslem

should. Then after a few moments of silence the Emir looked around over the throng of men and said, "Forgive him! — do you all forgive him?" They answered in chorus, "We do forgive him." Then again he raised his voice: "Do you all bear witness that he was a good Moslem, that he wronged no one, that he was kind and forgiving, that he bore enmity against no one?" Again they all answered, some in one word, some in another, but all with the same intent. And this testimony was evidently given that the two angels now guarding the dead man might hear it and bear it in mind when the day came for them to examine him.

Friends can not make a man's character "kind" and "forgiving" by declaring it so after his death, and it is too late for friends themselves to exercise a forgiving spirit toward one whom death has taken from them. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

To forgive is Divine. How certain we are that we are made in His image, when we forgive heartily and out of hand one who has wronged us: lightly we may say, "To err is human, to forgive divine," but we never taste the nobility and divinity of forgiveness till we forgive and know the victory of forgiveness over our sense of being wronged, our mortified pride, and wounded sensibilities. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

II God overrules all Things for Good

Joseph's Conviction. Now that Joseph, from the height he had reached, could look back on the way by which he had been led to it, he cordially approved of all that God had done. He would often find himself looking back and thinking, Had I found my brothers where I thought they were, had the pit not been on the Canaan-road, had the merchants not come up so opportunely, had I not been sold at all or to some other master, had I not been imprisoned or had I been put in another ward — had any one of the many slender links in the chain of my career been absent, how different might my present state have been! How plainly I now see that all those sad mishaps that crushed my hopes and tortured my spirit were steps in the only conceivable path to my present position.

Many a man has added his signature to this acknowledgment of Joseph's, and confessed a providence guiding his life and working out good for him through injuries and sorrows, as well as through honors, marriages, and births. *Marcus Dods.*

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists — one only: an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, however
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good. *Wordsworth.*

A Persian Legend. The legend tells us that a strange companion joined himself to Moses and took him upon a journey. By the seashore they saw a poor man's boat, and the angel broke a hole in the craft and passed on. Entering a city they saw an orphan boy digging in his father's garden, and the angel

that night ruthlessly broke down the wall about the garden They saw a father watching beside his sleeping son, and while the father slept the angel slew the son. Then Moses was stirred with indignation. Afterward this visitor reappeared to the Hebrew shepherd and explained: "A strong man was seizing boats for his campaign, and, knowing that the fisherman could in an hour repair the hole I made in his craft, I injured it for an hour that the man might keep the craft for years. That orphan boy was digging in the garden for his dead father's hidden treasure. He was a righteous youth, and I broke the wall down that I might expose the treasure hidden there. The father who loved his son was beseeching God for his son's mortal recovery, but the boy's pure spirit was immeshed in a diseased body and I freed his soul from his fleshly fetters that he might rise into nobler spiritual heights." *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Make us to meet what is or is to be
With fervid welcome, knowing it is sent
To serve us in some way full excellent,
Though we discern it all belatedly. *James Whitcomb Riley.*

The Master keeps the Key. Very beautiful was the thought of God's wise dealings with us once pressed home on one who was in acute distress because of a long succession of calamities, when, happening to visit a ribbon-weaving factory, he was shown a new machine for producing fabrics finer than any seen before. He examined it carefully; but, skilled mechanician though he was, he could not understand how the work was done. Finding that all the movements of wheels and levers and threads were controlled by some arrangement in a central box kept closely shut, he asked to be allowed to look inside, but was told, "The master keeps the key." These simple words were like a flash of heavenly light into his darkened soul. "Here is my life," he thought, "full of what seems to me inextricable confusion; what the meaning of its cross-purposes may be I can not tell! but if in me the divinely perfect Father is at last wrought out, I need not ask on what principle God is fashioning me for His glory, 'My Master keeps the key.'" *G. H. Knight,* in *The Secret of His Presence.*

Our Lord God is like a printer, who sets the letters backward; we see and feel Him set the types, but here we can not read them. When we are printed off, yonder in the life to come, we shall read all clear and straightforward. Meantime we must have patience. *Martin Luther.*

III Measuring Others by Ourselves

Only the Good discern the Good. With truth has Mrs. Browning declared that "Only the good discern the good." Joseph's brothers could not understand Joseph. Under similar circumstances they would have taken vengeance on brothers who had wronged them, hence they suspect that Joseph, now that the father's restraining influence is gone, will wreak vengeance upon them. A man can not understand a character with which his own is wholly out of tune.

Judging is Self-betrayal. "Every man imputes himself,"—so Tennyson once said. It is a startling thought, judging is self-betrayal. By the judgment with which we judge, we are ourselves judged. By our words we are justified or condemned. We should be more slow to judge, if we realized that the judgment we utter transfers us instantly from the judge's bench to the prisoner's bar. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Do you recall the cruel jailor in Charles Reade's story who would torture his

prisoners most horribly, and then go to his room and cry over *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* saying it was not possible there could be such cruelty in the world as Legree's?

Imputing Motives. "O yes, it looked very brave and magnanimous, and all that," said Wilbur; "but Steve knew well enough that people were looking on, and that it would take!" "Do you mean, Wilbur," asked Geraldine, "that that would have been your motive if you had done what Steve did?"

Geraldine had, almost without knowing it, discovered a great truth — that the motives which we ascribe to others are almost always those which would have actuated ourselves in the same circumstances.

There must always be a known unit. The standard by which we measure the character and conduct of others — too often a poor little pocket rule — is, consciously or unconsciously, that of self. It is hard for most people, perhaps for all, unless infused with the spirit of divine love, to believe in springs of action purer, loftier, more unselfish than our own.

Let us, then, be careful how we ascribe motives for the acts of others. For, after all, it is largely ourselves that we see in our companions. Nobility has a clear vision for nobility; meanness is swift to discern meanness. *M. S. Daniels,* in *The Classmate.*

Unless I see
The weaknesses and faults in me,
Those very things that warp my soul
Make life seem crooked in the whole.
Uncharity at home begins,
And all the world wears each man's sins.
Oh; 'tis a sweeter spirit, friend,
Our virtues, not our faults, to lend.
James Buckham, in *A Wayside Altar.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

What to others are disappointments, are to believers intimations of the way and will of God. *John Newton.*

We judge men by our standard,
Judge our nearest and dearest often wrong. *Thackeray.*

A man only understands what is akin to something already existing in himself. *Amiel.*

Forgiveness is man's deepest need and highest achievement. *Bushnell.*

Search thine own heart, what paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be. *Whittier.*

It is one mark of a superior mind to understand and be influenced by the superiority of others. *Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

There's no such thing as chance;
And what to us seems merest accident,
Springs from the deepest source of destiny. *Schiller.*

Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness, or else forgiving another. *Jean Paul Richter.*

They who say they will forgive, but can not forget an injury, simply bury the hatchet, while they leave the handle out, ready for immediate use. *Moody.*

He who can not forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself, for we all need to be forgiven. *Lord Herbert.*

The ills we see —
The mysteries of sorrow deep and long,
The dark enigmas of permitted wrong,—
Have all one key:
This strange, sad world is but our Father's school;
All chance and change His love shall grandly overrule.
F. R. Havergal.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Job. 2.10.

For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Rom. 8.28.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6.12, 14, 15.

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven. Matt. 18.21, 22.

Say not then, I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee. Prov. 20.22.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee. Prov. 25.21, 22.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Do we believe, even when all things seem to be against us, that God is our Friend, and that He is compelling all things to work together for our good? Do we believe that He is our Saviour, and that He will utterly redeem us from all evil, even when the sense of personal evil is strongest upon us? And that He asks us to share in His strife against sin, and all the miseries involved in that strife, only that we may become perfect even as He is perfect and share in the joy of His love and self-sacrifice? *Samuel Cox.*

THE LESSON STORY

Wishing to learn whether his brothers would treat Benjamin as they had treated him, Joseph pretended that he would retain Benjamin as his servant, and the others must return to their father without him. Judah's humble and marvelously touching appeal so stirred Joseph's heart to its depths that he could no longer repress his emotions. He sent away the Egyptian attendants and others present, and giving away to his tears made himself known to his brothers. They were naturally troubled at first, till Joseph reassured them, telling them it was God's purpose that he should come to Egypt and by a singular chain of circumstances become a ruler there. God had sent him before them to save them from

famine. He urged his brothers to hasten back to their father and say: "Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not." When Pharaoh learned that Joseph's brothers were with him, he bade Joseph send wagons with them to bring back their father and their families.

With difficulty Jacob was persuaded that his long-lost son was alive and ruling in Egypt; it was the wagons which finally convinced him of the reality of the good news. Joseph went towards the returning caravan, and in Goshen the aged father and his illustrious son met once more. Jacob and his sons settled there as keeper of their own and Pharaoh's herds.

Seventeen years passed. As he approached the end of his life he blessed Joseph's sons and formally adopted them into the family of Israel, appointing Ephraim and Manasseh heads of separate tribes, for Joseph was to have the right of the first born, a double portion in Israel. He blessed his own sons, and in prophetic vision seemed to see the future of the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he exacted a promise that they would carry his body back to Canaan.

After their father's death and burial Joseph's brothers, judging Joseph by themselves, feared he would take vengeance upon them for what they had done to him. They sent a message to him craving forgiveness, and then went themselves and prostrated themselves before him. "Am I in the place of God?" was Joseph's word to them, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good. Fear ye not."

Fifty-four years Joseph lived in Egypt after the death of Jacob. Though he had all the honors Egypt could bestow upon him, he renounced them for his sons, choosing rather that they should share in the humble life of the children of Israel. "I die," said he, "and God will surely bring you out of this land into the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

Having taken a solemn oath of the children of Israel that they would carry his bones with them to the land of Promise, this hero, one of the most faultless in Scripture, was "gathered to his fathers." His body was embalmed and placed in a coffin, and there it stood throughout long centuries; a constant reminder to the children of Israel that they were but sojourners in Egypt and the hour of their deliverance would surely come.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Jacob's prophetic blessing.
2. The divine purpose in the book of Genesis.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. How many books of the Old Testament begin with the conjunction *and?* What does this indicate? 2. In connection with verses 1–6 read the fuller accounts in Gen. 46.8–27 and 50.22–26. 3. What promise made to Jacob on his departure from Canaan is seen fulfilled in verse 7? (Gen. 46.3.) What earlier promises to Abraham? (Gen. 12.2; 17.4, 5; 18.18.) 4. What words spoken to Abraham prophesied the affliction of his descendants in Egypt? (Gen. 15.13.) 5. With verse 8 compare 1 Sam. 2.12. 6. Read in an encyclopedia about the life of the fellahs in Egypt at the present day. 7. What was God's purpose in bringing afflictions to the children of Israel in Egypt? 8. What did the critic mean who said that an artist needed poverty alone to make him a great artist?

LESSON VII — MAY 19

ISRAEL ENSLAVED IN EGYPT

Exodus 1.1–14. (Read the chapter.) Commit vv. 13, 14.

Golden Text

Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. Psa. 107.13.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 1.1–14.

1 Now these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob.
2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,
3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,
4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.
5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.
6 And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.
7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty: and the land was filled with them.
8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.
9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we:
10 Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the land.
11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.
12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.
13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:
14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was* with rigour.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1–6. These verses are a recapitulation of what has been told in Genesis.

1. *Children of Israel.* R. V., *sons of Israel.*

5. *Seventy souls.* Compare Gen. 46.8–27. The writer, from the covenant association of the number, loves to consider Israel as a seventyfold people, though at the same time himself furnishing data by which we see that he did not intend to give an exact census. *Steele.*

7. An array of figures to express the wonderful increase of the "seventy souls." At the Exodus their number was 600,000 men, besides children. (12.37.)

8. *A king which knew not Joseph.* This may mean either that the king was ignorant of Joseph's history in Egypt, or that he did not care for his services and hence ignored his people. "Not to know one" in oriental language often means not to acknowledge his authority.

9. The children of Israel are more and mightier than we. An exaggeration. Margin of Revised Version, *too many and too mighty for us.*

10. *Let us deal wisely.* His wisdom is what is deemed clever strategy. *Get*

them up out of the land. Up from the low land of Goshen to mountainous Canaan. Probably having heard them speak of the promise made to their fathers, that they should settle in Canaan, says Henry.

11. *They did set.* The Egyptians. *They built.* The Israelites. *Treasure cities.* R. V., *store-cities.* Strongholds where the grain could be stored.

12. *Grew.* R. V., *spread abroad. They were grieved.* The Egyptians. The Hebrew word *grieved* expresses a mixture of loathing and alarm. *Cook.*

14. *Made their lives bitter.* The heat of the sun in Egypt is so intense that continuous service is exhausting. *Bondage.* R. V., *service. In mortar.* In preparing the clay for brick-making. *In brick.* In building with the bricks, walls, canal banks, etc.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.* Judah is from the first a leader. He and Joseph were heads of what subsequently became the royal tribes. Reuben's impulsiveness reminds us of Peter, but he lacked Peter's underlying constancy. Levi's zeal wrought at first for evil, but afterwards for good. The other brethren were less distinguished. The "twelve tribes" are spoken of in the days of the apostles (Acts 26.17; Jas. 1.1) though, counting Levi, there were really thirteen tribes, and after the captivity only two. It was doubtless with reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, and therefore to the number of these patriarchs, that Christ chose the twelve apostles. *James Orr.*

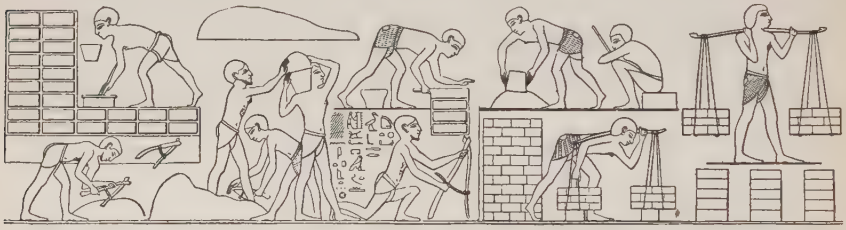
6. *Joseph died and all that generation.* The descent into Egypt was an ending and a beginning. It closed one chapter in God's providence, and opened a new one. It terminated the sojourn in Canaan; brought to a harmonious conclusion the complicated series of events which separated Joseph from his father, raised him to power in Egypt, wrought for the purification of his brethren's character, and prepared the way for ultimate settlement of the whole family in Goshen. It laid the foundation for new historical developments. There is now to be a pause, a breathing space, while the people are gradually multiplying, exchanging the habits of nomad life for those of agriculturists and dwellers in cities. The death of Joseph and his brothers and all that generation, is the proper close of this earlier period. *James Orr.*

11. *They built for Pharaoh.* The works of Rameses II were of various kinds. Some were temples, either built in the ordinary way of huge bricks of hewn stone, or else carved out of the solid rock, as that of Ipsambul in Nubia. Others were palaces for his own abode, with corridors, and courts, and pillared halls, and huge colossi representing his own august person, and internally ornamented with colored bas-reliefs of his own actions. Among them was also his Great Canal, and his Great Wall, the former connecting the Nile with the Red Sea, and running from near Bubastis by way of Pithom to the Bitter Lakes, and thence to Suez — the other carried from a point near Pelusium across the Isthmus to the inner recess of the western arm of the Red Sea. *George Rawlison.*

14. *Hard service in brick.* Mr. E. G. Acheson of Niagara Falls, while he was searching for the best clay to make crucibles, read the statements in the fifth chapter of Exodus about the use of straw and stubble in the manufacture of ancient brick. He procured some straw, had it boiled, and mixed the dark red liquid thus obtained with clay. He found that the plasticity of the latter was greatly increased. Investigation showed that tannin was the active agent, and

when he treated other clays with a solution of tannin in water he obtained surprising results. The strength and plasticity of the clay are increased, and the tendency to shrink and warp is greatly reduced. In this process sun-drying is far superior to burning, and in ten days the clay is better tempered than in months or even years by the old process. *Youth's Companion.*

14. *All their service was with rigour.* A picture on the walls of Thebes is very interesting. Here are represented captives working in the brick-fields. We see men going to the river to get the Nile mud. One figure is represented breast-high in it, with his load on his shoulder. Then there is the great heap of mud on the land. Men are filling baskets with it, and carrying it away; while others



Forced Laborers making and carrying Bricks in Egypt. From a Tomb in Thebes

are engaged with wooden frames pressing the mud into shape, just as can be seen in a modern brick-field. The bricks made, men carry them away on boards. These boards are slung by a pole over the shoulders. Others are piling the soft-bricks into heaps, allowing air space between. Then, on the same wall, we see laborers engaged in building. Men are bringing loads on their backs, while others are stooping to work. But ever present, ever vigilant, stands the task-master with his rod, and the official with his lash. *Henry A. Harper,* in *The Bible and Modern Discoveries.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *His household.* A "household" in the language of the East includes not only children and grandchildren, but retainers also—"servants born in the house," (Gen. 14.14.) The number of each household may thus have been very considerable. *George Rawlinson.*

10. *Let us deal wisely with them lest they multiply.* The Spartans who, according to tradition in Thucydides, thinned out their slaves by assassination, went further in the same direction. *Macgregor.*

11. *They did set over them taskmasters.* Hebrew, chiefs of tribute. The system of forced labor, which it was now resolved to extend to the Israelites, involved the appointment of two sets of officers — a lower class, who personally overlooked the laborers, and forced them to perform their tasks, and a higher class of superintendents, who directed the distribution of the labor and assigned to all the tasks which they were to execute. *George Rawlinson.*

11. *To afflict them with their burdens.* A study of the Egyptian monuments shows well what that meant. The stick, the bastinado, had its native home in Egypt, and the barbarous way in which it was applied is shown on many temples. For some crimes as many as a thousand blows were ordered. In a tomb at the Pyramids we see a superintendent beating a workman, who, with another man, is

polishing a slab of granite. At Thebes frequent pictures of the same punishment are to be seen. All Egyptian inscriptions tell the same story, and Egypt in unchanged. Those who witnessed the making of the Suez Canal saw the ant-like swarm of workmen — *Fellahin* taken by force from their villages,— filling the baskets with their hands, then hurrying with their loads up the banks to shoot the rubbish; or, later on, saw those men working in the sugar-fields of the late Khedive — saw them with loads of cane on their shoulders, hurried at a trot into the sugar house, two living streams of men — one loaded, the other unloaded — and saw the taskmasters with corbash or heavy thong in hand, standing at given distances on either line and then, if from fatigue, or what not, the burden carriers lagged, down on their naked backs came the lash! *Henry A. Harper.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Goshen, paragraph 43; Pithom, Raamses, paragraph 49; Egypt, 39–42.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Do you remember how Rip Van Winkle, in Washington Irving's story, found everything changed after his twenty years' sleep? The houses were changed, there were strange names over the doors — strange faces at the windows — everything was strange. When he reached the inn where he used to meet his cronies there was no one there who recognized him or whom he could recognize, and at last he exclaimed in bewilderment, "I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

Several centuries have passed since the events of our last lesson, and if Joseph could awake from his last long sleep and see the condition of his people he would be as bewildered as was Rip Van Winkle. There are no evidences of royal favors, no prosperity and comfort and ease, but instead there are evidences of royal scorn, and everywhere wretchedness and misery and toil.

For Older Pupils. The great ruler of the Eighteenth Dynasty, native Egyptians who succeeded the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, was Thothmes III, called by modern historians "the Alexander the Great of Egypt." He carried his conquests as far as the Tigris River, and on his return "recorded on the temple walls of Karnak a list of three hundred and fifty cities he had captured. Of these, one hundred and twenty were in the countries on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea." The Tel-el-Amarna letters, clay documents discovered in 1887, give considerable information about this period of Egyptian history. They are letters in the cuneiform language sent by kings and officials of western Asia to the kings of Egypt.

The early rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty were Rameses I and his son Seti I. Rameses II, the son of Seti I, is generally believed to have been the Pharaoh of the Oppression. Rameses II not only greatly extended the boundaries of the empire by conquest, but caused to be erected a great number of temples, palaces, store-houses, canals, etc. It is said that he erected twenty-one of the thirty-two obelisks in Egypt, and seven of the eight ruined temples in Thebes. The habit he had, however, of erasing the names of his predecessors on the monuments and

having his own inscribed in their place makes it difficult to tell how many may be ascribed to him.

In 1879 the mummies of Rameses II, his father Seti I, and many other Pharaohs were found near Thebes and they now stand in glass cases, labeled and numbered as "antiquities" in the Gizeh Museum at Cairo. We to-day may look on the black, leather-like lineaments of the Pharaohs who knew not Joseph, and who lived at least three thousand years ago.

With Joseph's life the book of Genesis ends and the book of Exodus begins. Between the life of Joseph and the life of Moses there is a long blank in the history of the Israelites. With the seventh verse of the first chapter of Exodus we feel the "horror of great darkness" which is settling down upon God's chosen people.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Taskmasters

Stimulus of a Stint. All men need taskmasters. A pedestrian of well-known swiftness and endurance makes the confession that, when he walks along the street, he is likely to fall into the lazy gait of the majority. It is not until he drops behind some rapid walker, and sees how much he must increase his speed to keep up, that he realizes how weakly he has been strolling along. Fortunate are the men who know how to get the most out of themselves by acting as their own taskmasters. They are the workers by schedule. They plan each day in advance, and do not toil at haphazard. Carefully estimating what they can do, and should do, they hold themselves rigorously to the stints they have fixed, and so avoid the necessity of having overseers. And they are the sort who rise to be overseers of others. *Sunday School Times.*

The Value of Taskmasters. Most people like an easy task, a "soft-snap," as the slang phrase expresses it. Short lessons, good times, pleasant duties, easy work — these are always popular. What if all life were made up of these only? How would strength and endurance and power be gained? We should become as strengthless as the soft hermit-crab, which takes possession of the shell of another marine animal and never leaves its safe shelter. If we want to find energetic, superior men do we go to the sunny slopes of Italy or Spain, or the fertile valley of the Nile, or any luxuriant tropical region where Nature is kindest and yields her best in return for the least effort on man's part, or do we find them in temperate regions where earth's products are extorted only by hard toil? There is scarcely a more pitiable tragedy in all English literature than that of Coleridge's life. His friends recognized his great ability and gave him a home with all its comforts so that he was freed from the necessity of effort, and the result was that he made comparatively little use of his brilliant gifts. "Adversity is like the period of the former and of the later rain,— cold, comfortless, unfriendly to man and to animal; yet from that season have their birth the flower and the fruit," says Sir Walter Scott.

Sin a Taskmaster. "Whoso committeth sin is the slave of sin." That is true in two ways. By the act of sinning a man shows that he is the slave of an alien power that has captured him; and in the act of sinning, he rivets and chains and increases the tyranny. He is a slave, or he would not obey sin. This teaching does not destroy responsibility, but it kindles hope. A foreign

foe, who has invaded the land, may be driven out of the land, and all his slaves set free, if a stronger than he comes against him. *Alexander Maclaren.*

How to vanquish the Bondage of Sin. The difficulty with most Christians is that they endeavor to gain a general victory, and no victory in particular. They expect to overthrow everything, and really overthrow nothing. Hence the wisdom, especially at the first, of singling out an enemy or point of assault, and beginning the onset where triumph is possible. Undertake at one time only what you may hope to carry, and never plan a defeat. And if you will know where to begin or what to undertake first, it is a good rule in general to fall upon that which presses you most. Whatever most especially annoys and harasses you, any sin that you would call a besetting sin, which has established its mastery over you, is that which hangs out a challenge and elects itself to be defeated by its forwardness. Do not undertake remote points or scale theoretical summits of perfection before you have scaled practical barriers close at hand. Vanquish this enemy that is pressing you most, then take his sword as he falls, and with that engage the next challenger that comes, who will certainly find you a much sturdier adversary than you were before. *Horace Bushnell.*

Our Heavenly Taskmaster. Sooner or later we find out that life is not a holiday, but a discipline. Earlier or later we will discover that life is not a playground. It is quite clear that God means it for a school. The moment we forget that, the puzzle of life begins. We try to play in school. The Master does not mind that so much for its own sake, for He likes to see His children happy; but in our playing we neglect our lessons. We do not see how much there is to learn, and we do not care. But our Master cares. He has a perfectly overpowering and inexplicable solicitude for our education; and because He loves us He comes into the school sometimes and speaks to us.

He may speak very softly and gently, or very loudly. Sometimes a look is enough, and we understand it, like Peter, and go out at once and weep bitterly. Sometimes the voice is like a thunderclap startling a summer night. But one thing we may be sure of, the task He sets us to is never measured by our delinquency. The discipline may seem far less than our desert, or even to our eye ten times more. But it is not measured by these. It is measured by God's solicitude for our progress; measured solely by God's love; measured that the scholar may be better educated when he arrives at his Father's home. *Henry Drummond.*

II The Use of Afflictions

Why Persecutions come. Had the Israelites not been oppressed in Egypt they would have remained there, and for them there would have been no crossing of the Red Sea and no voice from Sinai. It was their afflictions which made of them a united nation, brought to them a confidence in God as Guide, and at last made them willing to leave the land of Goshen for the Land of Promise.

The Church at Jerusalem were having a happy time among themselves, with never an attempt to carry the Gospel to all nations, till Saul came with his persecutions and scattered them, and it has been said that Saul the Persecutor did almost as much for the cause of Christ as Paul the Preacher.

Turn on the Dark. A little child suffering with a headache was lying in a brilliantly lighted room. The light became intolerable, and she called out,

"Please come and turn on the dark." Turning on the dark is good for headaches and many other conditions as well. Many a nature which in the sunshine of prosperity has seemed ignoble and selfish has been ennobled and glorified when God "turned on the dark."

"I had been ruined," said Themistocles, "had I not been ruined." A horticulturist showed me a fine tree which had been bark-bound, as he called it. He had made many slashes in the bark with a hatchet in order to give the tree a chance to live, for the thick bark had been slowly strangling its very life. So a character which is becoming bark-bound by its self-centeredness is sometimes allowed a chance to live and grow by the cuts given it in the way of troubles and sorrows.

It is from God. When Pilate spoke to Jesus of His power to crucify or release Him, Jesus said, "Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above." God could build a wall of granite about us, if He would, so that no enemy could touch us. We should remember when we are suffering injury or injustice at the hands of others, that God could have prevented it. He could have held back the hand, that it should not touch us.

This wrong that you are suffering, whatever it is, is from God, something He permits to come to you. . . . God's hand is in all things. Some one oppresses you, deals with you unjustly. God permits it, and this means that a good, a blessing, shall come out of the suffering. It may be a good for you. What you are called to endure is designed to make you better, richer in life and character, gentler-spirited, more patient. *Sunday School Times.*

All God's angels come to us disguised,—
Sorrow and sickness, poverty and death,
One after another lift their frowning masks,
And we behold the seraph's face beneath,
All radiant with the glory and the calm
Of having looked upon the face of God. *Lowell.*

Forerunners of Happiness. From Paul to Livingstone what heroic leader hath worn soft raiment? What Luther or Lincoln was reared in kings' palaces? It is wrestling against the wind works toughness in trees, and gianthood in men. Even Christ, who brings glad tidings of great joy, passed through the uttermost of pain on His way to the uttermost of pleasure on the world's throne of universal love and influence. No chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous. Nevertheless, the trouble of to-day will to-morrow change its countenance, and show itself as a forerunner of future happiness. It is, indeed, the man who washes the lenses of his eye with tears, and walks in a way that is bright with forest fires, that is promised the throne and scepter of manhood and happiness. *Newell Dwight Hillis*, in *The Quest of Happiness.*

III Then they cried unto the Lord in their Trouble and He saved them out of their Distresses

How are the Sails set? I stood on the beach, looking off over the sea, and there was a strong wind blowing; and noticing that some vessels were going one way and other vessels were going another way, I said to myself, "How is it that the same wind sends one vessel in one direction and another vessel in another direction?" And I found out, by looking, that it was the difference in the way they had their sails set. And so does trouble come on this world. Some

men it drives into the harbor of Heaven, and other men it drives on the rocks. It depends on the way they have their sails set. All the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans of surging sorrow can not sink a soul that has asked for God's pilotage. *DeWitt Talmage.*

Faith a Prophecy. During the terrible famine in Lancashire, England, the work ran low at one of the cotton mills. Occupation and wages grew less from day to day. At length the overseer met the half-starved operators, and announced to them the fatal tidings, "There is no more work." Flickering hope went out in black despair. One delicate sweet girl — thin and pale with suffering — arose amid the heart-broken company and began to sing these cheering words:—

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take!
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

A sunburst of hope came over the despairing company when the sweet strain was ended. It proved a prophecy. For the proprietors determined to struggle on a little while longer; and ere long that mill was running again full time. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Doctor Harper's Trust. When Doctor Harper of Chicago University was nearing death he cried out in his agony of physical suffering, "O God, help me!" "God will help you," said a Professor standing by his bedside, clasping Doctor Harper's hand. "You are right," returned the President, as a smile came over his lips, "you are right, God will help me, God will —" and with these words of trust he sank into unconsciousness.

A Physician's Experience. The *Youth's Companion* gives the life story of Doctor Ludwig Heim of Berlin. For many years he enjoyed a large practice and a perfect home life. Just as he was about to retire from his work when over seventy years of age, his entire fortune was swept away through the defalcation of a bank cashier. He was utterly crushed. He thought he could not begin the battle of life anew. His home became one of gloom and sorrow. Then suddenly the clouds lifted. "I saw, I felt," said the Doctor some time later, "that things could not, ought not, to continue thus. The money was gone beyond recall,— that was bad enough,— but far worse, our best earthly comfort, contentment, was gone with it. What was to be done? Nothing but this: conscious of my total inability to rescue myself from this sore strait, I betook myself to God for help, hastened to my room, bolted the door, fell upon my knees, and prayed most earnestly that the Lord would give me back the strength, courage, and contentment of former years. And a wondrous sense of peace and calm came over my soul.

The Lord answered me, bringing by His Spirit thoughts of humiliation and gratitude and faith which I could almost hear expressed in words, as if He had said:

"Thou wast the son of a poor clergyman, and in the beginning hadst nothing thou couldst call thine own. I blessed thee and thy family and made thee pros-

perous. Through long years I made thee to sport with these, My lent riches, which I have now suffered thee to be deprived of. Now come, Heim, have done with these sour looks. Play the child no longer, lest I must deal with thee in quite another fashion, and strip thee of other lent possessions nearer thy heart than merely worldly pelf. Besides, hast thou forgotten that the treasures of the world are Mine, and I can repair all thy losses if I see it is for thy good? Cheer up, then, and follow thy lawful calling with a firm and trustful heart."

"So spake the Lord unto my soul," said the doctor, "and I promised obedience; and behold, my gloom was gone."

SENTENCE SERMONS

The difference between iron and steel is fire, but steel is worth all it costs. *M. D. Babcock.*

When the tale of bricks is doubled, then Moses appears. *Old Jewish Proverb.*

All sunshine makes the desert. *Arab Saying.*

God washes the eyes by tears until they can behold the invisible land where tears shall come no more. *H. W. Beecher.*

In order to see into mankind, into life, and still more, into ourselves, suffering is requisite. *Jean Paul Richter.*

No cloud across the sun
But passes at the last, and gives us back
The face of God once more. *Kingsley.*

By recognition of God's kindness, by counting the mercies more and the sorrows less, by serene faith in divine help and strength, one can stand undaunted, smiling through his tears. *Youth's Companion.*

Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go.
Be our joy three parts pain,
Strive and hold cheap the strain,
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe.
Browning.

God is not a hard "taskmaster," ever on the watch to see that we are always at our brickmaking, but a Deliverer, who can bring us forth out of "the land of bondage" and lead us through the wilderness of difficulty onwards to the Promised Land. *T. C. Finlayson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Thy fathers went down into Egypt with three score and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude. Deut. 10.22.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psa. 46.1.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 2.3.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Heb. 12.11.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself because of him

who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth evil devices to pass. Psa. 37.7.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Suffering is as God's letter. Open it and read it. Many of you will find that you are entitled, or that there is an inheritance laid up for you. O my soul, sit thou down as a disciple of Christ, and say, O Lord, what wilt Thou? What shall it do to me? What secret is now to be disclosed? What better way is to be walked? What new strength is to be developed? What higher hope is to be awakened? What disinterested love is to be called into action? What has this suffering brought to me? *Henry Ward Beecher.*

THE LESSON STORY

The small beginning of the Hebrew nation, from Jacob and his twelve sons, the "seventy souls" in all who first came into Egypt, is told that the rapid increase of the Israelites may be impressively shown. "And Joseph died and all his brethren and all his generation." During the long silent centuries the Israelites became numerically a great nation, so great that when a new king arose who cared not for Joseph's services to Egypt and was utterly indifferent to the welfare of his posterity, he feared they might unite with his enemies and fight against him, and then leave the country. He decided to "deal wisely" with them, but his politic wisdom proved a foolish policy for himself. The very hardships which he imposed on them to break their spirits only made them willing and eager at last to "get them out of the land." He put taskmasters over them and caused them to build the store cities of Pithom and Raamses, but "the more he afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew." He caused them to toil hard in brick making and building, and in all kinds of service in the fields. Still he was troubled because of their increase, and he commanded that every son born to the Israelites should be cast into the river, but the life of every daughter should be spared.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The need of the period of oppression.
2. The "wise dealing" of Pharaoh and that of Russia.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What command of Pharaoh is recorded in Ex. 1.22? What act of Herod does this edict call to mind? (Matt. 1.16–18.) 2. For what service was the tribe of Levi afterward set apart? (Num. 1.47–53; 1 Chron. 23.24–32.) 3. What was the name of Moses' sister? What did she become? (Ex. 15.20.) 4. What was the name of Moses' older brother? (Ex. 7.7.) 5. What was one of the uses of bulrushes mentioned in Isa. 18.2? 6. How old was Moses when he slew the Egyptian? (Acts. 7.23.) 7. Do you think Moses did right in killing him? 8. Read Stephen's account of the early events in Moses' life, in Acts 7.17–29. 9. Do you think it was easy for Joseph to choose between his people and the court of Pharaoh?

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION OF MOSES

Exodus 2.1–15. (Read the chapter.) Commit vv. 9, 10.

Golden Text

Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. Acts 7.22.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 2.1–15.

1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.
2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was* a goodly *child,* she hid him three months.
3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.
4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.
5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.
6 And when she had opened *it,* she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.
7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?
8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.
9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.
10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.
11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren.
12 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.
13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?
14 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.
15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *A man.* Named Amram. (Ex. 6.20.) *Wife.* Named Jochebed. (Ex. 6.20.) *A daughter of Levi.* A woman who belonged to the same tribe as Amram.

3. *Ark of bulrushes.* Literally, chest of the papyrus plant. *Rawlinson. Slime.* The Nile mud or bitumen. *Flags.* A smaller species of reed.

4. *His sister.* Miriam. *To wit.* R. V., *to know.*

5. *Her maidens.* Her attendants.

11. *When Moses was grown.* According to Jewish tradition he was then forty years old. All we know about those forty years is told by Stephen in our Golden Text. *Spied.* R. V., *saw.*

13. *Two men of the Hebrews strove together.* Had they not beating enough from the Egyptians, but they must beat one another? *Henry.*

15. *Midian.* The country of the nomadic descendants of Midian, the son of Abraham and Keturah.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

3. *She put the child therein.* The ark of bulrushes she made that she might save her child from the Egyptians, which saved him through the Egyptians, was no mere prosaic fact: like all facts, it is as much allegory as fact, speaks of the eternal Providence that works in the humblest lives for the sublimest ends. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

10. *She called his names Moses.* The name was really an abbreviated one, *Messu* in Egyptian meaning "born of," and forming the second element in a name, the first element of which was the name of a god. Thus the name of Thothmes, the Egyptian conqueror of Canaan, is *Dehuti-messu* ("the son of Thoth") in the hieroglyphs, that of Rameses is *Râ-messu* ("the son of the sun-god"). But in the case of Moses there was an obvious reason why the name of the Egyptian divinity should be dropped, as, indeed, it sometimes was in the Rameses era, in the case of even pure-blooded Egyptians. In Hebrew, Messu is written Mosheh, and a "popular etymology" found for it in the Hebrew verb *Mâshâh*—"to draw out." Such plays upon words are common in the East, and the Greek form of Mosheh, Moyses, is similarly derived by Josephus from the Coptic *mo* (water) and *uses* (saved) out of it. *A. H. Sayce,* in *The Exodus and the Monuments.*

11. *He went out unto his brethren.* A weak nature in the court of Pharaoh had been subdued to utter courtiership, had expiated the sin of its Hebrew descent by deeper hate of the Hebrews; but the strong spirit, though tempted to the last apostasy, grew but the stronger for the trial. Pomp awes only those who see it; it burdens to weariness, vexes to weakness those who bear it. To see, while no Egyptian, Egyptian society from within, was to see its hollowness; to the free Hebrew spirit its tyranny was hateful, to the nature true born its semblance and its falsehood were abhorrent. To such, to be at once the oppressor's favorite and a child of the oppressed was to be cursed with a lot less endurable than slavery. What ought to be done is as clear as the finger of God can make it. The soul that has this choice to make is sorely tried, the soul that makes it is highly disciplined. Moses made it, and making it was made fit for nobler things. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." *A. M. Fairburn,* in *The City of God.*

15. *He sat down by a well.* It will be quite easy to interpret the feelings which govern him as he sits in a strange land. Let us overhear him: "Never so long as I live will I interfere in another quarrel: I have had experience

of two interpositions, and my heart is sad. When men are fighting again, I shall let them finish as they please, not one word will I say either on the one side or the other: from this day forth I shut my eyes in the presence of wrong." He hears some sound in the distance. Presently he notices women coming to the well, and presently, too, he observes shepherds driving them away. Gloriously the late rough heroism reasserts itself; he had promised nevermore to interfere, but the moment he sees another act of oppression, he springs to his feet to resist a cowardly tyranny. His voice quite startled the wretches, and they fell back unable to confront the face of an honest and determined man. So may all bad resolutions perish! We must interfere. The cause of righteousness is entrusted to us, and woe be to us if we take counsel with ourselves to save our own quiet at the expense of justice and honor! *Joseph Parker,* in *People's Bible.*

10. *He became her son.* One sign that God was working through every circumstance is seen in the events leading up to Moses' birth. Little did the Egyptian monarch think that in every shrewd stroke of his policy he was Jehovah's unwitting servant, paving the way for the education in his own palace, and with all the resources of his own land, of the Hebrews' deliverer. Yet so it was. His edict to slay the men-children compelled their being hidden. His further more cruel edict, turning every Egyptian into a detective to spy on the Hebrews, compelled Jochebed to trust her little one to the chances of the waters, less cruel than cruel men. God sent the monarch's daughter to rescue that child. Though his own mother nursed him, the royal palace received him. All that Egyptian civilization with its backward horizon of more than two thousand years, and with all its astonishing material splendor, but without any message for man, because destitute of all real vision of God, was made by this Hebrew-hater to serve its highest end in training Moses for his work. *John Smith,* in *The Permanent Message of the Exodus.*

Rameses II. From the Memnonium at Thebes

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe.* The bathing of the king's daughter in the open stream is contrary, indeed, to the custom of the Mohammedan Orient, where this is done only by women of low rank in retired places, but accords with the customs of ancient Egypt, and besides is perhaps connected with the notion held by the ancient Egyptians concerning the sacredness of the Nile, to which even divine honors were paid. *Keil.*

15. *Pharaoh sought to slay Moses.* Death was the inevitable punishment should the homicide be discovered, and he could save his life only by a hasty flight from the country. His guilt, indeed, was exceptionally great, for he had hidden the body and thus hindered embalmment, without which the soul of

the slain man could never enter into the Egyptian heaven. *Cunningham Geikie.*

9. *Pharaoh's daughter said.* The self-reliant action of the King's daughter, notwithstanding her father's cruel and absolute command, will illustrate the independence in character and action which distinguished the Egyptian women, at least the high-born. *Whedon.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Nile, paragraphs 32, 33; Midian, paragraph 65; On, paragraph 47.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever read a story about a child who was born in a humble home and by some strange fortune was brought up in a palace? Do you like such fairy stories? This is what happened to the Bible hero whose life we begin to study to-day; the way he was brought to the palace is a charming story, and best of all, it is a true one.

For Older Pupils. Overhanging the river Anapo in Sicily there are thousands of delicate waving tassels of the papyrus, a fairy-like sight, travelers tell us, for they are composed of delicate green filaments and are borne at the tops of leafless stems eight to fifteen feet in length. In the days of Moses the papyrus must have grown throughout the Nile Delta, but now it is found only along the upper stretches of the Nile. Mats, mattresses, sails, sandals, boxes, cordage, and many other useful articles were made from it, while its roots were dried for fuel and its pith was sometimes boiled and eaten. Its chief use was for making a kind of paper, called from the plant, papyrus. The stalk was cut in suitable lengths, the rind removed, and the inner part carefully unrolled. Another sheet was placed transversely across the first one with either the juice of the plant or a thin gum spread between the two, and then they were put under heavy pressure. The sheets were fastened end to end to make a long roll. In the British Museum there is a roll one hundred and thirty-five feet long. The great library at Alexandria had half a million long papyrus rolls written over, and these priceless books the Mohammedans burned. It is from the word *papyrus* that our word *paper* is derived, and it is interesting to know that the Hebrews called it *gomé,* a word resembling the Coptic word for "volume," while the Greeks called it *biblos,* whence we have our word *Bible.*

The bas-reliefs on Egyptian monuments show many "arks" and boats made of this plant. The Hebrew word translated "ark" occurs only in our lesson to-day and in connection with the account of the Deluge.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Moses Was Learned in All the Wisdom of the Egyptians, and Was Mighty in Words and in Deeds

What a Boy studied in Egypt. In no country was such value attached to education, nor was it begun so early as in Egypt. At the age of three a child was sent to school, and instructed by scribes. His writing was not by letters, but by hieroglyphics, which might be either pictorial representations, or symbols (a scepter for a king, etc.) or a kind of phonetic signs, and as there seem to

have been hieroglyphics for single letters, for syllables, and for words, that art alone must, from its complication, have taken almost a lifetime to master perfectly. But beyond this, education was carried to a very great length, and, in the case of those destined for the higher professions, embraced not only the various sciences, as mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, etc., but theology, philosophy, and a knowledge of the laws. There can be no doubt that, as the adopted son of the princess, Moses would receive the highest training. *Edersheim,* in *History of the Exodus.*

The Wisdom of the Egyptians. Not until our modern excavations uncovered the old cities where Moses spent his childhood and youth did men realize how glorious an epoch was his. At a time when Greece was inhabited by wandering tribes, and the Romans were hunters wandering through the forests in search of game, the Egyptians had founded cities, developed arts and industries, and many forms of knowledge; their architecture still amazes and instructs our builders. Their obelisks proclaim their knowledge of civil engineering. Their scholars had carried astronomy, mathematics, and geometry to a high stage of perfection. When long afterwards, here and there, an intellectual torch flamed up in Greece it was found that the torch had been lighted by a paper brought from Egypt. Strangely enough it has been noted that the four great teachers who founded their respective forms of knowledge in Greece were all educated in cities where Moses himself had studied. Pythagoras was the first Greek mathematician, but this wise teacher studied in Thebes, renowned less for its hundred gates than for its schools of instruction. Thales and Democritus did much for philosophy, but both had lived long in Memphis, city of tombs, temples, and pyramids. Solon stands forth the great law-giver, but Solon studied in Sais, the Oxford of Egypt. Herodotus was the father of Grecian history, and Herodotus derived his method from his teacher in the temple of Hierapolis. *Newell Dwight Hillis, Moses the Typical Hero.*

In Egypt, government had been established so long and law had come to be so thoroughly administered that life and property were as safe as among ourselves to-day; science had made such advances that even the weather-beaten and time-stained relics of it seem to point to regions into which even the bold enterprise of modern investigation has not penetrated, and all the arts needful for life were in familiar use, and even some practised which modern times have as yet been unable to recover. *Marcus Dods.*

Religion in Egypt. Egypt had high thoughts of God, though its faith and action were often foolish. It said, God is one, yet it worshiped a multitude of deities no man can now number. It believed in the Invisible throned in Light, yet it adored and honored with manifold gifts the bull and the crocodile, the ape and the cat. It loved to picture Osiris the Judge, sitting stern, inflexible, administering justice in the Hall of Double Truths to all who had lived; yet it lived as if God had no concern with the vices of men. Yes, Egypt had much to teach Moses, and Moses was wise enough to learn the best it could teach. He learned that an exalted conception of God badly expressed did not make a good religion; that a debased worship of Deity did not ennoble man or regulate for good his conduct: that a faith administered by priests for the priesthood could only deprave and enslave the people. He so learned what religion ought not to be that he was enabled to understand what it must be made if it was to rule man. *A. M. Fairbairn,* in *The City of God.*

Moses was Mighty in Words and Deeds. Would you say that coal is

warmth or that a steam engine is power? Coal is the basis of warmth and a steam engine is the basis of power; each must be put into use to produce results. We say that knowledge is power, but like the coal and the steam engine it must be used before it results in power.

Who learns and learns, but acts not what he knows,
Is one who ploughs and ploughs, but never sows,

says an oriental proverb. Moses' knowledge was power, how great a power we shall see as we follow his life and leadership during the next four months.

II Bear Ye One Another's Burdens

His Brother's Keeper. Moses from his high position at the court of Pharaoh might easily have said that he could do nothing for his brethren toiling at their forced labors under the lash of the taskmaster. As an Egyptian he could do nothing to lighten their burdens. He might have spoken a few words of sympathy to them, and then have gone his own way, congratulating himself that he had escaped their hard lot. The only way in which he could bear their burdens was to make himself one of them, to suffer with them, to use his higher wisdom for them as their leader. When he "went out unto his brethren and looked on their burdens" the voice of God had already come to him, "Where is thy brother?" and his answer had been, "I am my brother's keeper."

How to grow. Robinson Crusoe is really an impossibility. That is, the conception of a man steadily improving in his spiritual life, and growing better and stronger because he is wholly alone, and parted from other men for twenty years, is a false conception. So of religious orders which bind themselves to silence. You do not let the man in the next room speak to you, lest he should interrupt your thought of God. But the precise thing for which God put you and him into the world is that you and he shall speak to each other. You are not to improve your life alone. You are to bear each other's burdens. You are to live in a common life. *Edward Everett Hale.*

Men grow by having responsibility laid upon them, the burden of other people's business. Their powers are put out at interest, and they get usury in kind. They are like men multiplied. Each counts manifold. Men who live with an eye only upon what is their own are dwarfed beside them — seem fractions while they seem integers. *Woodrow Wilson.*

A Good Resolve.

I am only one;
But still I am one.
I can not do everything;
But still I can do something,
And because I can not do everything,
I will not refuse to do something that I can do.

Edward Everett Hale.

III The Courage of Convictions

Moses slew the Egyptian. The rash act of Moses in slaying the Egyptian we can not wholly justify nor yet wholly condemn. His hatred of oppression, his strong love for his kindred, his zeal for their cause, his violent and righteous indignation at the cruel wrong committed, and his training in the court of a despot all moved him to the deed. Yet he exceeded the bounds of justice in

killing the Egyptian, whose cruelty demanded punishment but not death, and he had no more right to "take the law into his own hands" than has a mob which is bent on lynching a criminal. A patristic writer draws a parallel between his deed and that of Peter's cutting off the high-priest's servant's ear, and says that both their hearts resembled a field covered with weeds whose luxuriant growth promised good fruit when the field was sown with good seed.

Without any qualifications whatever we can admire the courage of his convictions which he displayed. He cared not that the deed would sever his connections with the Court and make him a sharer of his brethren's lot, he was utterly regardless of his own interests, and intent only on his brethren's welfare.

Beware of Imprudent Prudence. I dare say you may be afraid of rashness. You are partly right, yet it is possible you may not know what rashness is. It is certain that the world is deeply indebted to its rash men, its first travelers, its leading spirits. Prudence (in its ordinary but most inadequate sense) has done very little for the world, except to tease and hinder many of its masters and sovereigns; it would have kept back every mariner from the deep, and deterred every traveler from the desert — it would have put out the fires of science, and clipped the wings of poetry — it would have kept Abram at home, and found Moses a comfortable settlement in Egypt. Beware of imprudent prudence; it will lull you to sleep, and bring you a nameless and worthless end. *Joseph Parker,* in *People's Bible.*

Moral Cowards. Bagehot says that a Fiji chief was one day going over a mountain path followed by a long string of people, when he happened to stumble and fall. All the rest of the people immediately did the same thing except one man, and the others at once fell upon him, demanding why he considered himself better than their chief. Those who have no manly independence of their own are wont to berate the one who, like this Fiji savage, has the courage of his convictions.

It is said that a timid court preacher was once preaching before Louis XVI and made the declaration that "All men must die." The king frowned, and the affrighted preacher stammered out, "I–I–mean almost all, your majesty."

In an American city a meeting of citizens was called to protest against a great public wrong. One prominent man after another was asked to act as Vice-President of the meeting and refused, saying that he would like to do so, that his heart was with the movement, but his business relations were such that he dared not.

A Brave Girl. A coal cart was delivering an order the other day, and the horse, after two or three efforts to back the heavily loaded cart, became obstinate. The driver began to beat the animal and a crowd quickly collected. Many exclaimed over his cruelty, but the driver kept on beating the horse and nothing was being done about it when a little girl about eight years old approached, and said:

"Please, mister."

"Well, what yer want?"

"If you'll only stop, I'll get all the children around here, and we'll carry every bit of the coal to the manhole, and let you rest while we're doing it."

The man looked around in a defiant way, but, meeting with only pleasant looks, he began to give in, and after a moment he smiled, and said:

"Mebbe he didn't deserve it, but I'm out of sorts to-day. There goes the whip, and perhaps a lift on the wheels will help him."

The crowd swarmed about the cart with a will, many hands helped to push, and the old horse had the cart to the spot with one effort. *New York Sun.*

God's Will.

When tyrant feet are tramping upon the common weal,
Thou dost not bid us bend and writhe beneath the iron heel.
In Thy name we assert our right by sword or tongue or pen,
And even the headsman's ax may flash Thy message unto men.

Thy will! It bids the weak be strong; it bids the strong be just;
No lips to fawn, no hand to beg, no brow to seek the dust.
Whenever man oppresses man beneath the liberal sun,
O! Lord, be there; Thine arm made bare, Thy righteous will be done.
John Hay.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Life was his school; God was his teacher. *Hillis.*

One only knows that which he practises. *Savonarola.*

Live pure, speak truth, right wrong,
Else wherefore born? *Tennyson.*

To learn, to teach, to serve, and enjoy, is the ideal aim of life. *Julia Ward Howe.*

Bear your own burdens first; after that, try to help carry those of other people. *George Washington.*

The noblest question in the world is, What good may I do in it? *Benjamin Franklin.*

The man that does not love his people can not love his God. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

Wisdom is always good to learn, whose wisdom soever, it may be. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.
. . . . . .
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting, in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified. *Lowell.*

Education is leading human souls to what is best, and making what is best of them; the training which makes men happiest in themselves also makes them most serviceable to others. *Ruskin.*

There are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three. *Lowell.*

Happiness makes one content with any abode; but a small disgrace darkens the life of a great man. . . . Let not thy heart grow proud because of thy riches; for it is God which has given them to thee. . . . Good words shine more than the emerald which the hand of the slave finds among a heap of pebbles. . . . The son who accepts the words of his father will grow old in consequence; for obedience is of God, disobedience is hateful to God. *The Wisdom of the Egyptians.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Prov. 9.10.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. John 13.17.

How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver. Prov. 16.16.

Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life. Prov. 4.13.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. 3.14, 15.

Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? 1 John 3.16, 17. R. V.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

In his Republic, Plato compares the world to a den in the mouth of a cave. The beings in the den can see only the shadows of things, not things as they really are. One of them makes his escape from the den into the light. At first he can not see, and only after a long, painful process of education is he able to enjoy the full light of the sun. Shall he then, asks Plato, live and enjoy the light and air of this new world, or shall he remember his fellows in the cave and go back to tell them of the world of reality? Yes, he must go back and bear patiently with those in the den who are sure to misunderstand. Why? To interpret to them the meaning of the shadows and to let them share the blessings of light.

"Freely ye have received, freely give," is Christ's message to us. Are we heeding it?

THE LESSON STORY

A "goodly child" was born to a man and woman of the tribe of Levi, and for three months the mother hid her babe. Finding it would not be possible longer to conceal him from those who sought all the male Hebrew babes to drown them at Pharaoh's command, she put him in an ark, or boat, of bulrushes which she had carefully made water-tight by daubing it with the Nile mud and with pitch, and left it among the reeds by the river with an older daughter near by to watch. Pharaoh's daughter came with her attendants to the river, saw the ark, and had it brought and opened. The baby cried and so touched her heart that when his eager sister came and asked if she should not call one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for her, the princess bade her do this. Can you not see the mother's joy when Miriam called her and the princess told her to care for the child?

When the boy was about three years old his mother brought him to Pharaoh's daughter. She named him Moses and as her son he was brought up at Pharaoh's court and finely educated. When he was grown his heart was with his people; he could not live contentedly at court himself and know that they were suffering at the hands of taskmasters. As an Egyptian he could do nothing for them; he must become one of them. He watched them at their labors, and when he saw an Egyptian strike a Hebrew he was violently indignant and struck and killed the Egyptian. The next day he saw two Hebrews struggling together

and at once assumed the task of settling their quarrel. The one who did the wrong turned upon him with taunting words: "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?" Moses knew that his deed had been discovered, and fearing for his life, he fled to Midian. He had thought he could use his superior knowledge and training for the benefit of his people, but they were not yet ready to be led away from their bondage nor was he ready to be their leader. God was ordering all things. In the wilderness Moses was to be prepared for his mission through forty years of communing with God.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Whenever governments enact penal laws which are against the laws of God, those governments or nations are, by the sure and inevitable process of revolution, preparing for themselves destruction. As when you compress yielding water, it bursts at last. *F. W. Robertson.*

2. The first effect of attempting to lift men from a lower sphere to a higher is to make them your enemies. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. How old was Moses at the time of the next lesson? (Acts 7.23, 30.) 2. What other instances are recorded of God's revealing Himself in fire? (Ex. 19.18; 24.17; 1 Kgs. 19.12; Ezek. 1.27, 28; Dan. 3.24, 25.) 3. What clause in the Lord's Prayer teaches the same thought as "put off thy shoes" in verse 5? (Hallowed be thy name.) 4. The fear of Moses, verse 6, recalls Jacob's exclamation at Bethel. What was it? (Gen. 28.7.) 5. What use did Jesus make of the expression in verse 6? (See Matt. 22.31, 32.) How did this prove the resurrection of the dead? (God is God of existent, not non-existent beings, hence Abraham continues to live after death.) 6. To whom besides Moses did God speak at Horeb? (1 Kings 19.8–12.) 7. What quality ascribed to Moses in Num. 12.3 is shown in verse 11? 8. How do you account for the change in Moses' self-assertiveness between lessons IX and X? 9. With Moses' answer to the call of God compare Jeremiah's answer when called to be a prophet, in Jer. 1.6. 10. What was Isaiah's response to God's call? (Isa. 6.8.) 11. How were the objections of Moses in 3.11, 13; 4.1, 10, met? 12. For other "tokens" requiring faith in future fulfilment, see 1 Sam. 2.34; 2 Kings 19.29; Matt. 2.12. 13. What did Jacob mean when he said to the angel, "Tell me thy name?" (Gen. 32.29.) (Reveal thy character.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

On reaching the land of Midian Moses sat down by a well. Soon the daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, came to draw water for their father's flocks, and when Moses saw the shepherds drive them off he took their part and helped them. Because of this kind deed he received a friendly welcome from their father. He married one of Reuel's daughters, but his thoughts were still on the banks of the Nile with his people, and when his son was born he named him Gersham, "a stranger here."

LESSON IX — JUNE 2

MOSES CALLED TO DELIVER ISRAEL

Exodus 3.1–14. (Read Exodus 3–6.) Commit vv. 2–4.

Golden Text

And he said, certainly I will be with thee. Exodus 3.12.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 3.1–14

1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Horeb.

2 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4 And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.

6 Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee: and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? What shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The flock.* Hebrew word means small cattle, which might include sheep and goats. *Maegregor.* *Jethro.* Reuel, 2.18, margin. *To the backside of the desert.* Westward from his home. *Desert.* The wilderness, which afforded pasturage. *The mountain of God.* Where God appeared to him, now and later. Ex. 19.20.

2. *The angel of the Lord.* According to verse 4, Jehovah himself. *A bush.* Supposed to be a thorn bush, a species of acacia. *The bush was not consumed.* Usually considered a symbol of the people of Israel, who were kept by God and not consumed by the fires of their afflictions.

4. *Moses, Moses.* The repetition denotes urgency.

6. *Thy father.* Probably used as a collective term here for his ancestors.

7. *I have surely seen.* Hebrew, seeing I have seen. It is not so much certainty as continued looking that is implied. *Rawlinson.*

8. *I am come down.* God is represented as dwelling in Heaven, and coming down from thence to the habitation of man. See 1 Kings 8.27 and Prov. 15.3 which shows this language was not understood literally. *A good land and a large.* The promise to Abraham in Gen. 15.18–21 included almost the whole of Syria. *Flowing with milk and honey.* See Num. 13.27; Deut. 8.7–10. The best products of a land abounding in pastures and flowers.

11. *Who am I?* See Num. 12.3.

12. *Certainly I will be with thee.* Hebrew, *since I will be with thee.* Moses meant to urge that he was unfit for the mission. God's reply is, "not unfit, since I will be with thee." *Delitzsch. This shall be a token unto thee.* The token or sign may have been the burning bush, or the promise of being with him and enabling him to work miracles, or the promise (requiring greater faith), that the time would come when the children of Israel would worship God on that very mountain. The sign given to the shepherds, Luke 2.12, was "Ye shall find the babe."

13. *What is his name?* The names of God were descriptive of His attributes. At creation he was *Elohim,* the God of power; to Abraham in a strange land he was *El-Shaddai,* God Almighty; to Melchizedek he was *El-Elyon,* The Most High. Moses now asked for a name that would represent the aspect in which God was about to appear to Israel. *Porter.*

14. *I AM THAT I AM.* The text expresses the truth that God's nature, while manifesting itself actively, can not be defined in terms of any other substance, but can be measured only by itself. Hence it includes also the further truths that being not determined by anything external to Himself, He is consistent with Himself, and unchangeable. *Driver.*

15. This is called His Memorial Name.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *The bush burned with fire and was not consumed.* In the vision of Moses, how clear and definite is the revelation of an only and a personal God! How clear, too, the anticipation of what is now the accepted truth of physical science, that the energy of God, though always expended in nature and in history, is never consumed and never destroyed. . . . Did Moses recognize this range of meaning? Hardly. Great discoverers never knew the fullness of their findings. Columbus, Newton, Galvani — how the modern world would daze them with surprise! Great prophets, likewise, never knew the fullness of their revelations; scant indeed would be their interpretations of their dreams and visions. No Scripture is of private interpretation; God's messages belong to humanity, and it requires the whole mind of men to sound their depths. Jesus heard in the words of Jehovah that which escaped the ear of Moses. "That is not there!" exclaimed a celebrated German poet as he listened to a marvelous read-

ing of one of his poems. "That is not there!" And so Moses might say to Jesus discovering life and immortality in the words that are recorded (verse 6). For his mind was fixed upon a single point — the discovery of God. *Charles J. Little,* in *The Angel in the Flame.*

4. *God called unto him.* Many people, reading those tremendous words, are inclined to explain them away. Ah! they say, the man fancied, from some things, that God must be calling: this is only a dream, a judgment, an inference of his own. Not at all. It may be that you have a nature closed against the divine — which God has never stirred. You may be shut up as in the cave of Plato, to shadows of sense, surmises of soul. But as not only Moses, and Israel, and some few biblical characters have found, but also many consecrated workers in the past and in our own times, God has a way of His own into the spirit which He has made. Standing over against all that is in the man, He lays His

A Herdsman in the Desert of Sinai

will upon him. He wakens to realize that he stands summoned by that Being, to specific submission and definite service. Such a consciousness had Abraham, and Jeremiah, and Paul; and in the high places of the field, on Indian plains and Pacific isles, are many who are bearing the burden and heat of the day, because of the overpowering conviction that they have been divinely chosen for, and are being divinely helped in, the work in which they are engaged. *John Smith,* in *The Permanent Message of the Exodus.*

2. *In a flame of fire.* Before the spirit can thus be filled with the Divine, like a lamp with light, it must have been long concentrated on it to a degree unknown to other men. Earth must well-nigh have disappeared, before the heavens thus open as the familiar home of the thoughts. The Unseen must have become the great reality, before which the visible and temporal rank as infinitely subordinate. In this sense Moses was, at once, the first and the greatest of the prophets, for no one before Christ had spoken in the name of God with such

commanding majesty, or shed such a flood of light on the divine nature and laws. The burning bush of Horeb was, indeed, only a symbol of the sacred fire which glowed through his being, and kindled in the world, unextinguishably, the light of the true religion. . . . Revelation doubtless poured into his soul the light by which it realized such truths, but his whole nature must have strained towards that light with a grand earnestness, to have been fitted for such communications. *Geikie, Hours with the Bible.*

14. *I AM.* The term was not, in its primitive sense, a proper name; it was the third person singular of a verb so used as to denote One who had not been and could not be named, who was too exalted, too glorious, too universal and external in His Being and action, to be known by any term or title that had been, or could be used of creative things or mortal men. He who is, He who causes to be, the term is in either case present, ascribes to Him no past, no future, only a now, yet a now which is also time and change. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

The word *Jehovah* is a combination of three Hebrew words, which may be translated into an English form thus: Yehi, "He will be," Hove, "being," and Hahyah, "He was." A combination is made from the three words by taking the first syllable of the first *Ye*hi, the middle syllable of the second h*ov*e, and the last syllable of the third hahy*ah,* so that we have the name *Yehovah.* The whole name means, "He that will be, He that is, He that was." If the mind reach out to the limitless stretches of future generations, God says, "I am He that will be." If men think of the present moment, with all its marvelous manifestations of life and order and mystery and revelation, God says, "I am He that is." If the mind be carried as far back as possible into infinite spaces of the past, God says, "I am He that was." *G. Campbell Morgan,* in *The Ten Commandments.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *He led the flock to the backside of the desert.* According to the Hebrew system of orientation, the East is the region which is looked on as before a man; the West, behind him; the South and North as the right and left hand. *Cook.*

2. We do not know the precise place; but a tradition, reaching back to the sixth century of the Christian era, fixes it in the same deep seclusion as that to which in all probability Moses afterwards led the Israelites. The convent of Justinian is built over what was supposed to be the exact spot where the shepherd was led to draw his sandals from off his feet. *Dean Stanley.*

5. *Put off thy shoes from off thy feet.* This command may be accounted for from the custom in the East of wearing shoes or sandals merely as a protection from dirt. No Brahmin enters a pagoda, no Moslem a mosque, without first taking off at least his overshoes; and even in Grecian temples the priests and priestesses performed the service barefooted. When entering other holy places also, the Arabs and Samaritans, and even the Yezidis of Mesopotamia, take off their shoes, that the places may not be defiled by the dirt or dust upon them. The place of the burning bush was holy because of the presence of the Holy God, and putting off the shoes or sandals was intended to express not merely respect for the place itself, but that reverence which the inward man owes to the Holy God. *D. Delitzsch.*

8. *A land flowing with milk and honey.* The natural richness of Palestine, the variety and excellence of its productions, are attested by all ancient writers,

whose descriptions are strongly in contrast with those of later travelers. The expression, "flowing with milk and honey," is used proverbially by Greek poets. *Henry Cooke.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The desert of Sinai, paragraph 54; Horeb, paragraph 67; The Races of Canaan, paragraphs 118–125.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Do you remember the lesson we had last year about the shepherds finding Jesus? They were keeping watch over their flocks, and "The angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." What was the good tidings? What did they do when the angels were gone? "Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us?" they said.

Our lesson to-day is about a shepherd who was watching his flocks alone when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and he was sore afraid.

For Older Pupils. "The youth who will rule to-morrow," says Doctor Hillis, "is the youth who to-day is storing up resources of knowledge and wisdom, of self-reliance and courage. Moses will control our jurists to-morrow because he spent forty years in the desert reflecting on the principles of justice. Paul had the honor of fashioning our political institutions because he gave twelve years of general preparation and three years of special preparation to the study of individual rights. . . . If we define a great nation as a people with a noble history lying back of it, let us define a great individual as a soul with years many and great lying back of him and lending him their intellectual and moral force."

Two-thirds of Moses' life was spent in storing up knowledge and wisdom for the last third. The forty years in Egypt, when he learned the wisdom of that land, and then the forty years of silence in the wilderness, when he communed with himself and with God, had fitted him for his stupendous, God-appointed task of leading a horde of bondmen out of Egypt and making of them a great nation. His call to the work is our subject to-day.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Seeing God

Mountain Men. In this story we have no doubt the record of what we may call a religious crisis in the man's own mind. It may not have been sudden, though it came suddenly to a head. For his seeing Jehovah at last was but the climax of a long experience, and was a real vision, as real as Isaiah's vision of Him in the lowly temple. *A. B. Davidson.*

The mountains catch the first rays of the morning sun. Then, afterwards, the plains and valleys are filled with the light of the sun. So there are mountain men. The sunrise of God falls upon them first. We call such men prophets.

We call them seers. They are so tall, intellectually and spiritually, that they see away over the heads of the rest of humanity. They are men of grand visions and hopes. They have a great forward and upward looking faith. With the eyes of seership they gaze upon God's unsetting stars. They hear out of the eternal silences whispers that speak to them of that which is more real than the granite of the globe. They utter helpful, inspiring, everlasting truth. They lead us to the realities of the living God. *John Reid Shannon.*

Those who have no Vision. Mozart and a hunter were walking in a forest. A lark suddenly soared toward the sky, singing as it went, and the huntsman said, "What a shot!" but the musician said, "What would I give, could I but catch that trill!" When a breeze arose, the huntsman exclaimed, "It will startle a hare!" but Mozart said reverently, "Listen, what a diapason from God's great organ!"

Calvin lived within sight of Mount Blanc, but there is not a line in his writings which show that he ever saw it. "'The Man with a Hoe' was 'brother to the ox,'" says Wilbur F. Sheridan, "not because he had a hoe, but because he had nothing but a hoe. He had no vision of the Invisible."

Earth's crammed with Heaven,
Every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes."

Vision may be cultivated. A sailor on the lookout signals "A ship ahead!" He has caught a glimpse of a white canvas far away in the driving mist and blinding rain. In the meantime the landsman on board has seen nothing. The light is the same for both. One has vision, because he has cultivated the habit of seeing. Those who would see spiritual things should cultivate the habit of seeing; and nothing is simpler. Use the light of to-day; to-morrow the light will be the same, but the eyes will be stronger and the vision clearer. *Amory H. Bradford,* in *The Inward Light.*

Behold! Your brother is a mighty mystery to you. Do not then think or wish to find God unmysterious. Behold! He who has most of your brother's spirit knows him best. Do not complain then, if one who has more of God's Spirit than you have, who is humbler, truer, purer, manlier than you are, knows Him as you do not, sees Him as you fail to see Him. But behold! As soon as you are fit to know your brother, he can not help showing himself to you. By that right of fitness you enter in and comprehend him. Be ambitious, then. As fast as you can contain more knowledge of God it shall be given to you. The "pure in heart" shall certainly "see God." *Phillips Brooks,* in *Seeking Life.*

Who hears the eternal harmonies
Can heed no outward word;
Blind to all else is he who sees
The Vision of the Lord. *Whittier.*

II The Value of Self-confidence

Since I will be with thee. Forty years have passed since Moses in his self-reliance "Supposed," as Stephen said, "that his brethren would have understood how that God by His hand would deliver them," and forsook Egypt because his brethren did not believe in him. During these years he has grown in knowledge of himself and of God, and when he receives the direct command of God to become their leader he is no longer self-sufficient, but humbly says, "Who

am I that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt — they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice." "Thou art able, since I will be with thee," is God's answer.

When he trusted in himself alone, Moses was powerless; when he relied on God, he was full of power. Yet he had to overcome his self-distrustfulness, and believe in himself as the one chosen by God for this great work, before he could accomplish anything. The lesson for us lies not in the humble, self-depreciating words of Moses —"Who am I that I should do this," but in the words of God, "Thou art able since I will be with thee."

The Difference between Confidence and "Cheek." Confidence isn't cheek and cheek isn't confidence, any more than foolhardiness is bravery or bravery foolhardiness. No, there's a genuineness to confidence. You saw it in the great eager eyes of Bruno this morning, as you took from the deserted breakfast table a bit of meat, and, holding it high above his nose, made him jump for it. He had confidence in his own ability to make the leap, and confidence that he would get the tid-bit as the reward for his effort. Confidence in one's self, confidence in others, confidence that inspires to effort, is what the world wants.

If Bruno had allowed his appetite to get the better of his judgment and had lifted his great paws on to the table linen, and snatched that bit of meat from the plate, he would simply have shown "cheek," not confidence, and he would have been shoved out the side door, instead of being allowed to take his morning nap in front of the fireplace. *Howard W. Tilton,* in *Lay Sermons.*

Believe In Yourselves. Diffidence or self-distrust, however valuable as an element of growth, if it becomes dominant, is destructive of the power of growth. Faith may be accompanied by great consciousness of weakness, but it ought to bear its fruit in unlimited belief in the power to overcome weakness.

Men rise above themselves — that is to say, become inspired — by putting aside their weakness and trusting to their strength, verifying the lines of Lowell:

"Those love truth best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do."

More men and women fail by reason of underestimation of their power than by reason of over-valuation. As a rule, people of conscience do not take themselves at an adequate valuation; they do not believe enough in themselves. If they believed more in their own resources, they would make more out of their lives. To believe in ourselves in the sense of regarding ourselves full of the germs of growth is not only to secure the highest growth, but it is to render the finest service which a man can render to his fellows. . . . Putting the highest possible price on ourselves does not mean that we consider ourselves at the moment worth the price, but it does mean that we intend to make that price represent our actual value to the world. *Hamilton Wright Mabie,* in *Works and Days.*

Move to the fore.
Say not another is fitter than thou —
Shame to the manhood that sits on thy brow!
Own thyself equal to all that man may.
Cease thine evading; God needs thee to-day,
Move to the fore! *James Buckham.*

III Certainly I will be with thee

God's Method with us. God does not, as might some fond friend, repu-

diate your self-depreciation. He leads you away from your own merits and demerits to Himself. The rushlight of the night is blotted into nothing by the rays of the sun. And man's nothingness is drowned out of consciousness, in the streaming radiance of divine all-sufficiency. "Who am I," dost thou say? What matters? Listen, this is the voice of God, "Certainly I will be with thee." These great railway trucks with their tonnage painted on each (not to speak of the heavy loads they carry), seem the last things in the world to move at a great speed. But, bound to each other, they are bound by great links to an engine surcharged with propulsive power, and will soon thunder through sleeping town and hamlet as on the wings of the wind. "Certainly!" is there any iron link ever forged that can bind with greater security than this word of the Eternal, thrown out that the faith of Moses may hold it fast? *John Smith,* in *The Permanent Message of the Exodus.*

A Christian Truth in Pagan Version. Near the middle of the last century, David Brainerd had heard of a savage tribe in the heart of the New Jersey forests, and yearned to bring them under Christian influences. He pushed on through the wilderness till he found himself near their village and stopped to rest and fortify himself for the new undertaking before him.

When he finally reached the wigwams, he was an astonished man. His faith and hope had made him bold, but he little expected when he faced the enemies of his race that a "whole village" would come out to meet him as if he had been a long-looked-for friend. Led by their chief, the Indians welcomed him as their guest, and seemed almost to reverence him as a prophet. He stayed among them and preached, winning the hearts and the faith of the untutored natives, until he gathered a church of between seventy and eighty Christian Indians.

Brainerd never knew, until they told him, the secret of his welcome. The savages had discovered the white stranger in the woods, and a party of them had waited to steal upon him and kill him as soon as he entered his tent. Peering between the folds of the canvas, they saw him on his knees, praying.

Ignorant wonder held them back, and their wonder turned to awe when they saw a rattlesnake crawl over the stranger's feet and pause beside him, with its head raised as if to strike; but it only gazed at him a moment, flickered its red tongue, and glided out of the tent on the opposite side. The Indians hurried back and reported that the white man was under the protection of the Great Spirit.

However much the superstition of these "children of nature" influenced their thought, they told a Christian truth in pagan version. It is certain that

Man is immortal till his work is done,

and God had work for Brainerd to do. *Youth's Companion.*

Believe God's Promises. "Do not spoil the chime of this morning's bells by ringing only half a peal," wisely counsels Miss Havergal. "Do not say, 'Hold Thou me up,' and stop there, or add, 'But all the same, I shall stumble and fall!' Finish the peal with God's own music, the bright words of faith."

SENTENCE SERMONS

All but God is changing day by day. *Charles Kingsley.*

The commands of God are opportunities. *Little.*

When God calls, He qualifies; when He qualifies, He calls. *Matthew Henry.*

God's visits if gratefully received will be graciously repeated. *Matthew Henry.*

Unless the Lord be with you, all your efforts are in vain. *Motto of the City of Edinburgh.*

Beware of despairing about yourself; you are commanded to put your trust in God and not in yourself. *Augustine.*

When God does His best work He needs the best men to help Him. *George Eliot.*

The key to a noble life is to see clearly, and then to act in absolute obedience to the highest vision. *W. J. Dawson.*

We do nothing well till we learn our worth, nothing best till we forget it. *James Martineau.*

Spirituality is seeing God in common things, and showing God in common tasks. *M. D. Babcock.*

Wherever a man's soul is brought into the presence of God Almighty the ground is sacred, whether it be in a church or on a ledge, on a crag or in a cathedral. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. Isa. 45.6.

Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Isa. 4.8.

For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon man, in slumberings upon the bed. Job 33.14, 15.

The Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. Psa. 145.18.

Moses was very weak, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. Num. 12.3.

Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee withersoever thou goest. Josh. 1.9.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

How do I stand as to this Being who calls Himself, "I AM THAT I AM?" If, indeed, it be true that He is, then what is He to me? What am I to write over against this solemn name, "I AM?" *C. H. Mackintosh.*

THE LESSON STORY

As Moses followed his flock in the wilderness as far as Mount Horeb, the thought of his brethren in Egypt must have been constantly in his mind. The consciousness that he was the one destined to deliver them from their oppression grew upon him. Then one day the crisis came. He saw a bush burning with fire and yet not consumed. He turned aside to see the great sight. He heard the voice of God calling to him from the bush, "Put off thy shoes for this is holy ground." And then came the commandment to go to Pharaoh and lead the children of Israel out of their bondage. He hesitated. "Who am I, that I should go?" he questions in self-depreciation. "I will enable thee to do it, for I will be with thee," is God's answer, and He promises him the seemingly im-

possible shall be accomplished and they shall worship Him upon the very mountain where now they stand. "What shall I tell the children of Israel is thy name?" is Moses' next question. "I AM THAT I AM" is God's answer, the one only and eternal God. "But the people will not believe me nor listen to me," is Moses' further objection, and God gives him power to perform miracles to convince them that he had been sent by God. "But I am slow of speech," an insurmountable obstacle, Moses thinks. "I will teach thee what thou shalt say," God assures him. Moses, however, still objects and God's anger is kindled against him. His spokesman shall be his brother Aaron. Thus God impelled him, and at last, strong in the confidence of a divine mission, he rises to the height of the great trust imposed upon him, and henceforward never falters.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Was it right for the Hebrews to take possession of a land already occupied by others?

2. Our conception of God. That which every one calls God is but an objective appellation for his own vision, high or low, of the one universal Power, Life, Intelligence, and Will. From the very nature of things He is true or false in the degree of truth or falsity in the worshiper. Startling as it may seem, so far as conscious relation exists on the manward side, each one makes his own God. From the limited, local, and exclusive idea of the Infinite which prevailed during the early stages of the Old Testament literature, there is a constant advance in moral quality, on and up to the lofty conceptions which are so richly set forth in the New Testament Scriptures. *Henry Wood.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Tell about the plagues brought upon the Egyptians. (Ex. 8–11.) 2. How did the passover affect the reckoning of time by the Israelites? (Ex. 12.1, 2.) 3. Give a full account of the observance of the passover. (See Ex. 12.1–11.) 4. What is the meaning of "a lamb according to your families" in verse 21? (See Ex. 12.3, 4.) 5. Where did the Israelites next keep the passover? (Num. 9.1–5.) 6. Where did they first keep it in Canaan? (Josh. 5.10.) 7. Read about Hezekiah's great passover in the 30th chapter of second Chronicles. 8. What happened when Jesus first kept the passover at Jerusalem? (Luke 2.41–52.) 9. Describe the last passover of Jesus and the Supper He then instituted. (Luke 22.14–20; 1 Cor. 11.23–26.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and ask him to permit the children of Israel to leave. Pharaoh refuses, and the first result of their efforts is that the burdens laid on the Israelites are greatly increased, they are commanded to search for their own straw, which had been provided them before, and yet to make the same number of bricks each day. God brought one plague after another upon the Egyptians — frogs, lice, flies, murrain, boils, locusts, darkness — and while the plagues lasted Pharaoh was willing to let the Israelites go, but during the respites he hardened his heart and refused.

LESSON X — JUNE 9

THE PASSOVER

Exodus 12.21–30. (Read Exodus 7–12.) Commit vv. 26, 27.

Golden Text

When I see the blood, I will pass over you. Exodus 12.13.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 12.21–30

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.
22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.
23 For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*.
24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.
25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.
26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?
27 That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.
28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.
29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that *was* in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.
30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21. *Draw out.* R. V. M., *Go forth. A lamb.* R. V., *lambs.* The lambs have been in a special enclosure for four days. (Ex. 12.3, 6.) *According to your families.* According to the number in each family. (See 12.3, 4.) Jewish tradition fixes the number of persons at ten for one lamb. *Kill the passover.* The paschal, or passover lamb.

22. *A bunch of hyssop.* The hyssop of the Old Testament was probably the caper plant, which grows plentifully in the Sinaitic region. It was regarded as having purifying properties, Lev. 14.4, 49–52; Num. 19.6; Psa. 51.7. *Delitzsch. In the basin.* The basin in which the blood was caught when the lamb was killed. *None of you shall go out.* There would be no safety outside the blood-sprinkled portal.

24. *This thing.* The sacrifice of the lamb, or the entire passover sacrifice.

27. *The Lord's passover.* The word *passover* may refer to God's sparing the Israelites, but more probably it refers, as in verse 21, to the passover lamb sacrificed to the Lord.

29. *From the firstborn of Pharaoh . . . in the dungeon.* From the highest to the lowest.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *The elders of Israel.* The original division of Israel was into twelve tribes, after the twelve sons of Jacob, an arrangement which continued, although the sons of Joseph became two tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh), and the priestly tribe of Levi had no political standing. These twelve tribes were again subdivided into families (or rather clans) mostly founded by the grandsons of Jacob, of which we find a record in Num. 26, and which amounted in all to sixty. From Joshua 7.14 we learn that those "families" had at that time, if not earlier, branched into the "households," and these again into what is described by the expression "man by man." The latter term, however, is really equivalent to our "family" as appears from a comparison of Josh. 7.14 with verses 17.18. Thus we have in the oldest times tribes and clans, and in those of Joshua, if not earlier, the clans again branching into households and families. The "heads" of those clans and families were their chiefs; those of the tribes, the "princes." These twelve "princes" were "the rulers of the congregation." By the side of those rulers, who formed a hereditary aristocracy, we find two classes of elective officials, as "representatives" of "the congregation." These are designated in Deut. 29.10 as the "elders" and the "officers," or, rather, "scribes." Thus the rule of the people was jointly committed to the "princes," the "elders," and the "officers." *Edersheim, History of the Exodus.*

23. *The Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses.* The common understanding of the term "passover," in connection with the Hebrew Exodus from Egypt, is that it was, on the Lord's part, a passing by those homes where the doorways were blood-stained, without entering them. Yet this meaning is not justified by the term itself, nor by the significance of the primitive rites. Jehovah did not merely spare His people when He visited judgment on the Egyptians. He covenanted anew with them by passing over, or crossing over, the blood-stained threshold into their homes, while His messenger of death went into the houses of the Lord's enemies and claimed the firstborn as belonging to Jehovah. In the passover rite as observed by modern Jews, at a certain stage of the feast the outer door is opened, and an extra cup and chair are arranged at the table, in the hope that God's messenger will cross the threshold, and enter the home as a welcome guest. This points to the meaning of "cross-over," and not of "passing-by." *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *The Blood Covenant.*

29. *At midnight.* That was the night of Israel's birth as a nation; of their creation and adoption as the people of God. (Isa. 43.15.) Hence the very order of the year was now changed. The month of the passover (Abib or Nisan) became henceforth the first of the year. (Ex. 12.2.) The later Jews had a twofold computation of the year — the ecclesiastical year, which began with the month Abib, or Nisan, and by which all the festivals were arranged; and the civil year, which began in autumn, in the seventh month of the sacred year. In

Egypt the year properly began with the summer equinox, when the Nile commenced to rise. *Edersheim, The Exodus.*

30. *Pharaoh.* This is not the Pharaoh of the Oppression. The Pharaoh of the Exodus is generally thought to be Meneptah II, who at the death of his father, Rameses II, 1281 B. C. (according to Mahler), succeeded to the throne. His accession seems to have been the signal for a rebellion. Foreigners swarmed into lower Egypt and threatened the very existence of the empire. The withering and destructive oppression under which the Hebrews groaned, is practically substantiated in an Egyptian inscription which contains the name "Israel." (The stele of Meneptah found in 1896.) A hymn of victory addressed to Meneptah

Meneptah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus

alludes to "the Israelites" to whom "no seed" had been left. The ominous uprisings among the surrounding nations taxed the military resources of the Kingdom to their limits. The plagues, also, paralyzing in their effects on the land and the people, stung the Pharaoh to a pitch of desperation, till he finally granted every demand of the Hebrews. *Ira M. Price,* in *The Monuments and the Old Testament.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

24. *Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance.* In the feast of the passover, the flight of the Israelites, its darkness, its hurry, and confusion, was acted year by year, as in a sacred drama. Night falls; the stars come out; the bright moon is in the sky; the household gathers round, and then takes place the meal, of

which every part is marked by the almost frantic haste of the first celebration, when Pharaoh's messengers were expected every instant to break in with the command, "Get you forth from among my people." The guests of each household at the moment of the meal rise and stand round the table. Their feet, usually bare when in the house, are shod as for a journey. Each member of the house holds a staff, as if for immediate departure; the long Eastern garments of the men are girt up, for the same reason, round their loins. The roasted lamb is torn to pieces, each snatching in his eager fingers the morsel which he might not else have time to eat. Not a fragment is left for the morning, as if it would find them gone and far away. The cakes of bread which they break and eat are tasteless for the want of leaven, as if there had been no leisure to prepare it, and finally the thanksgiving for the deliverance is always presented. *Stanley, Jewish Church.*

So long as the temple at Jerusalem remained, the Jews went thither to celebrate the passover feast. But when the temple was destroyed, it was no longer lawful for them to sacrifice the paschal lamb; for the command was explicit: "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates . . . but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to cause his name to dwell in." (Deut. 16.5, 6.) And now the Jewish observance of that feast is but a partial one, in the household, with a bit of roasted lamb to represent the commanded sacrifice. In only one place in all the world is there any continuation of that sacrifice; and that is near the ruins of the ancient Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, by the scanty remnant of the Samaritan people. Although that temple was unauthorized by Jehovah, and the Samaritans were a mongrel people with a mongrel religion (1 Kings 27.8–12; 2 Kings 17.24–28), so many sacred associations cluster around Mount Gerizim, and the connection of the Samaritan rites and ceremonies is so direct with the original Hebrew ritual, that an exceptional interest attaches to this one vestige of the ancient passover sacrifice. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Studies in Oriental Life.*

25. *Ye shall keep this service.* Oriental Christians recognize two passovers, says a writer from Palestine — the Jewish, which they call the legal passover, and the Christian, which is called the holy passover. The latter begins on Easter Sunday.

30. *There was a great cry in Egypt.* The moment a death occurs in a household the female members sprinkle themselves with water, and then throw dust or ashes over their persons; immediately after which they raise in concert a shrill cry or shriek which is heard over the whole neighborhood. This is often continued for an hour or more — shriek after shriek filling the air. Imagine those shrieks raised in every house of every city, village, and hamlet in the country, and then some conception may be formed of that "great cry." *Josiah Porter,* in *International Bible.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Egypt and the journey to the Red Sea, paragraphs 44–48, 49, 60.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. How do we celebrate the Fourth of July? Why do we celebrate it? Who ruled our country before the Revolutionary War?

When did our country become a nation? Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving Day? The people of Israel had a celebration which was to them what the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving Day are to us. By what country were they ruled for several centuries? What hardships did they have to endure? Who was chosen by God to deliver them from the Egyptians and make them an independent nation? Was Pharaoh willing to let them leave Egypt? How did God make him consent to their leaving? We have now come in our study to their last night in Egypt; "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt," the Bible tells us. God appointed a passover service to be celebrated year after year in memory of what He did for them that night.

For Older Pupils. "This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come in and eat; let all who require come in and celebrate the passover. This year here, next year in the land of Israel! This year slaves, next year sons of freedom!" Thus the Jews chant year after year, for the hope has never left them that they will yet as a nation celebrate in Jerusalem this ancient feast whose first observance is described in our lesson to-day.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us

The Sacrifice is God's Sacrifice. The Lamb is a Lamb of God. The sacrifice is of God's providing. You remember in that beautiful story, miscalled the sacrifice of Isaac — for Isaac was not sacrificed — the son says to the father, Here is the wood, here the faggots, here the fire, but where is the sacrifice? and Abraham says, God will provide the sacrifice. That is what God has done. The sin is ours, the sacrifice is God's. It is not a lamb, it is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. It costs something to get rid of sin, but the cost is borne by God. We do not need to provide a sacrifice. We do not need to provide it in bullocks and doves, nor in penance and fasts, nor in agonizing hearts and in wrestling prayers. We do not need to provide it in burdens borne and sorrows endured. We have not to provide it at all. The Lamb of God is God's Lamb. The sacrifice is God's sacrifice. *Lyman Abbott.*

In ancient religions, God is conceived as a terrible Being, to be appeased by dreadful rites, to be bribed, not into mercy — for mercy He had not — but into partiality and favor. In Christ, God stands forth "reconciling the world unto Himself." The gift is God's; the joy is man's. In the Son, so freely given, God and man meet, the right hand of His divinity binds God to man, the left hand of His humanity binds man to God. Over our weary and sinful earth a spirit of peace was breathed when the words fell and went wandering over it, as from the bosom of the Eternal; "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *A. M. Fairbairn*, in *The City of God.*

Why God is satisfied with the Sacrifice of Christ. If a man fails in business, but after spending a life-time to recover himself, restores to you not only what you lost by him, but more than could possibly have been made by yourself with the original sum lost, you ought to be satisfied, and God is satisfied with the work of Christ because there is in it a love and an obedience to Him, and

a regard to right and holiness, that outweighs all our disobedience and alienation. *Marcus Dods.*

There is one Mediator between God and Man. The poet Æschylus had incurred the displeasure of the Athenians. He was on trial before the great popular tribunal, consisting of many hundreds of citizens, and was about to be condemned. But Æschylus had a brother who had lost an arm in the great battle of Salamis, where the Greeks fought for their existence against the Persian aggressors. This brother came into court and spoke not a single word of entreaty, but, letting fall his mantle, showed the stump of his arm lost in his country's defense, and there he stood until the Athenians relented and Æschylus was permitted to go free. So when we ask for pardon, our Saviour stands up in our behalf and shows where He was wounded on the cross. *John A. Broadus.*

What the Sacrifice of Christ means. When love takes the form of sacrifice, when it resigns and endures and suffers for our sake, then its power to move and quicken us is deepened and enhanced a thousandfold. Even when the sacrifice has been made without our knowledge, when the evidence of it comes to us long after it is over, when we turn over the letters or the diary of some one who has gone from us, and it flashes upon us that we have been carried tenderly upon a loving heart, that for our sake some sharp pain has been borne, some great offering has been made, this flash of knowledge is like the waking of a new life in our hearts. This is what it means to see Jesus Christ as our Saviour. It is to know that His love for us was so great that He died upon the cross to save us from our sins. He loved you and me personally, He died for you and me personally.

There was a prisoner in one of the dungeons at the time of the French Revolution who was much beloved by many people. But there was one love which surpassed them all. It was the love of his father; and this was the proof of it. The two men bore the same name, and when the son's name was called from among those who were to die, the father answered to it, and took his place, and went to the scaffold, and laid his head upon the block. The blade of the guillotine flashed; the head fell; the father died for the son he loved. That is what Christ has done for us. When we believe this we know what love means. But think what it means to know that this love which has done so much for us is the love of the Son of God. It sets the seal of eternity upon it. It lifts the sacrifice of Jesus, and lifts us with it, up into the very heart of God. *Henry van Dyke,* in *The Open Door.*

II This do in Remembrance of me

Till He come. Christ swept aside the sacrifice that was made for the redemption of Israel from the captivity of Egypt, and He said, "Forget the shadow and remember the substance; forget the sacrifice that was made of the lamb, unbroken in bone, and remember the other of Him whose body was given for you, the Lamb of God, the Passover for the sins of the world."

"Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11.26.) All symbolical worship carries in itself the witness of its own cessation, and points onward to the time when it shall not be needed. It is, so to speak, a concession to sense. It is no proof of spiritual immaturity to try to do without the help of external rites. It is no proof of spiritual immaturity to cling to them, if only it be distinctly understood that the whole value of them lies, not in what they

are, but what they signify. But still the existence of symbolical worship is a prophecy of its own cessation. It digs its own grave, as it were; and just because here we need the bread and wine to help us to remember the death, the taking of these, in compliance with that temporary necessity, itself carries our thoughts, or ought to carry them, onward to the time when, Christ Himself being present with His Church and we sitting at His table in His Kingdom, the symbol shall be no more needed. *Alexander Maclaren.*

A Helpful Comparison. When the miner in the American prairie sinks a shaft to strike the coal formation, he finds, far below, the images of beautiful plants, lying like lacework spread out upon tables of ebony; images of ferns, and leaves and flowers, which, millions of years ago, perhaps, ceased, from some change of climate, to open in the cold spring time, and hence to fall in autumn. There these pictures lie telling us when was the summer time, where the drifting snows fell. Yet as these dimly shadow forth more perfect adaptations in nature and nature's growth, so do these humble memorials, the bread and wine, shadow forth dimly — the bread of which, if a man eat, he will never hunger, and the wine which we shall drink new in the Kingdom. *Selected.*

A Communion Hymn.

Lord, as Thy temple's portals close
  Behind the outward-parting throng,
So shut my spirit in repose,
  So bind it here, Thy flock among.
The fickle wanderer else will stray
Back to the world's wide parchèd way.

Here where Thine angels overhead
  Do warn the tempter's powers away;
And where the bodies of the dead
  For life and resurrection stay;
And many a generation's prayer
Hath perfumed and hath blessed the air.

O lead my blindness by the hand,
  Lead me to thy familiar feast,
Not here or now to understand,
  Yet even here and now to taste
How the Eternal Word of Heaven
On Earth in broken bread is given. *William E. Gladstone.*

III What Mean ye by This Service?

The Value of Religious Ordinances. One great secret in the growth of character is the art of prolonging the quickening power of right ideas, of perpetuating just and inspiring impressions. And he who despises the aid of all external helps for the accomplishment of this object is not likely to succeed. Religion, some men say, is an inward thing; it does not consist of public worship, ordinances, and so forth, but it is a state of heart. Very true; but he knows little of human nature who fancies a state of spirit can be maintained without the aid of external reminders, presentations to eye and ear of central religious truths and facts. We have all of us had such views of truth, and

such corresponding desires and purposes, as would transform us were they only permanent. But what a night has settled on our past, how little have we found skill to prolong the benefit arising from particular events or occasions! Some parts of our life, indeed, require no monument; there is nothing there we would ever again think of, if possible; but, alas! these, for the most part, have erected monuments of their own, to which, as with a sad fascination, our eyes are ever turning — persons or places — and these natural monuments must be imitated in the life of grace. By fixed hours of worship, by rules and habits of devotion, by public worship, and especially by the monumental ordinance of the Lord's Supper, must we cherish the memory of known truths, and deepen former impressions. *Marcus Dods.*

What Church Services should mean. The gathering of Christians together in the house of God, to pray to God, to praise Him, to hear His messages, should be a most solemn function. Our feelings when we assemble for this purpose should ever be, "Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground;" and with Jacob we should say, "Surely God is in this place; this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven." There is something shocking in levity and vanity, in frivolous chatter, in the lounging somnolence born of our eating and our drinking, in the conceited irreverence and unseemly demeanor, which too often pain us in scenes of Christian worship. *F. W. Farrar.*

The world has a right to look worshipers, as they come out of church, in the face and ask them, "What do you bring away from your altar, your psalm, your sermon, your benediction? What gifts have you to distribute to your neighbors?" *Bishop Huntington.*

What Regularity in Devotion means. We hear much in this day of the superiority of the free spirit to times and seasons and outward expressions of worship, and of a devotion concentrated in specific acts at fixed times. But unless there are such fixed acts, there will be little diffused devotion. It will be evaporated out of, not diffused through, the daily life. If there are no reservoirs, there will be no water in the pipes. The nerves must be knit up into ganglia, if there is to be sensibility through all the body. If a man does not pray at definite times, and that daily, he may talk as he likes about all life being worship, but "any time" will soon come to mean "no time." *Alexander Maclaren.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Only in the New Covenant does the Old unfold
And hidden lies the New Testament in the Old. *Augustine.*

Judgment may halt, but it rarely fails to overtake the guilty one at last. *Horace.*

Subsists no law of life outside of life.
The Christ Himself had been no Lawgiver
Unless He had given the life too, with the law. *Mrs. Browning.*

Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood;
And bear thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God. *Isaac Watts.*

Christ, the paschal Lamb, supplies the key to the whole passover ordinance;

and in His salvation through sacrifice, we see the eternal realities, which were shadowed forth in material type, from the beginning. *John Smith.*

Church-going, the keeping of the Sabbath, are not religion; but religion hardly lives without them. *F. W. Robertson.*.

A man may look long and bitterly at his sins and forget that Christ died for him: but if he believes that Christ died for him, he can not help remembering his sins. *Henry van Dyke.*

"My theology now is in four little words, 'Jesus died for me,'" said Charles Haddon Spurgeon to a friend when dying; "I do not say that this would be all I should preach were I raised up again, but it is enough to die upon — 'Jesus died for me.'"

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God. Eph. 5.2.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1.29.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15.13.

For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. 11.26.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter 1.18–19.

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. 5.7-8.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Before the Israelites had left Egypt, before they were freed from their oppressors, they were directed to partake of a sacrificial meal, which ever afterwards commemorated their deliverance from bondage. "They bowed the head and worshiped," although they could not fully understand all the meaning of the service. We may not understand all the meaning of Christ's sacrificial death, but we are told to perform an act in remembrance of that death, and we are obedient to that command when we bow our heads, believing that Christ died for us.

THE LESSON STORY

It is the last night of the Israelites' stay in Egypt. Yet one more evil is to come to the Egyptians, which will impel Pharaoh, not only to let the Israelites go, but even to "thrust them out hence." Through the elders Moses gives directions for the keeping of the passover. A lamb is to be killed for each family, or for two families where one family is not large enough to eat it all, and is to be eaten roasted with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

They are to partake of it in haste, with loins girded, shoes on their feet and staff in hand, ready for the journey. Most important of all the directions is that the blood of the lamb shall be sprinkled on the lintel and the two side posts of the door, and that no one shall leave the house until morning. For the destroyer will that night kill the firstborn in every Egyptian home, but will pass by the Israelites' houses marked with the blood. The passover observances would not only spare their lives and strengthen them for the coming journey, but would be a lasting memorial of God's care, to be observed from year to year.

The people all bow their heads and worship, and do as Moses commands.

At midnight there is a great cry in the land, for there is no Egyptian household in which there is not one dead. Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron and commands them to leave with all the children of Israel and all their possessions.

SUBJESTS FOR BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Protestant and Catholic interpretation and valuation of the sacraments.

2. The growth of ritual among the Israelites. From the beginning, the religion of Jehovah contained both an ethical or spiritual side, and a ritual of service or worship. Both, tracing their origin to Moses, gradually expanded in the course of ages, received additions, and underwent changes as circumstances required. The law, *i. e.* the ritual, grew in contents just as much as the ethical elements of the religion did. The two streams went on increasing, side by side, but the Law tended always to take up into itself and embody the loftier elements of the prophetic teaching. *A. B. Davidson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What course did the Israelites take after leaving Egypt? (Ex. 13.17–14.9.) 2. What is the modern name of the arm of the Red Sea which the Israelites crossed? (Gulf of Suez.) 3. With verse 13 compare 2 Chron. 20.17. 4. Why did Moses need to encourage the Israelites, verse 13? (Verses 8–12.) 5. What is the first mention of Moses' rod? (Ex. 4.2–5.) 6. What happened to Aaron's rod as recorded in Num. 17? 7. Read Miriam's song of deliverance in Ex. 15.1–21. 8. Read Psa. 77.14–20; 106.1–12; 114; 124.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Hastily summoned from their passover feast, the children of Israel, six hundred thousand strong, started with their women and children and their flocks and herds for the appointed meeting place. As they came together from town after town they were joined by a "mixed multitude" of others, probably kindred Semitic prisoners of war, oppressed slaves from other lands. From Rameses to Succoth they journeyed and then on to Etham on the edge of the wilderness. "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light."

LESSON XI — JUNE 16

ISRAEL'S ESCAPE FROM EGYPT

Exodus 14.13–27. (Read Ex. 13.1–15.21.) Commit vv. 13, 14.

Golden Text

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. Ex. 14.30.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 14.13–27

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:

16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea.

17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18 And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 And the Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to *them*, but it gave light by night *to these:* so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided.

22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground:* and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch, the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel: for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

26 And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

13. *The salvation of the Lord.* The deliverance which God will accomplish.

Shew to you. R. V., *work for you. To day.* The date of the Exodus is given by some scholars as 1250 B. C.

14. *Hold your peace.* Cease complaining. See verses 11, 12.

15. *Wherefore criest thou unto me?* No reproof, merely an admonition to resolute action. *Delitzsch.*

16. *Thy rod.* The rod marks the foresight of Moses, his confidence, and the sacramental union of the divine help with this sign. *Lange.*

17. *I will get me honour.* Compare 9.16.

19. *The angel of God.* The invisible movement of the angel was recognized in the visible motion of the pillar of cloud. *Lange. Which went before, i. e.* usually. *Went from before their face.* R. V., *removed from before them.*

20. *It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these.* Dark to the Egyptians, bright to the Israelites. R. V., *There was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night.*

22. *A wall.* A symbol of protection. See 1 Sam. 25.16.

24 *The Lord looked . . . cloud.* This probably means that the cloud suddenly assumed a fiery appearance where it had been dark before; or they were appalled by violent thunders and lightnings, which we are assured by the psalmist did actually take place, together with great inundations of rain. (Psa. 77.17–20.) Such tempests would necessarily terrify the Egyptian horses and produce general confusion. *Clarke. Troubled.* R. V., *discomfited.*

25. *Took off.* By means of the deep sands and entanglement with one another. *Drave.* R. V., *drove.*

26. *That the waters may come again.* A northwest wind would bring back the waters in the space of a few hours.

27. *Strength.* R. V. M., *wonted flow.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

13. *Moses said unto the people.* The bearing of Moses at this crisis was sublime in its calmness and trust. He does not return "railing for railing." No angry word escapes his lips in reply to the reproaches of the people. They murmur; he betakes himself to prayer (v. 15). They look to the visible chariots, he to the invisible Power which is higher than all. They seem bereft of reason, fearing immediate death; he is calm, undaunted, self-collected, and gives them the best of counsel. The situation was one in which God alone could bring salvation. They could do nothing for themselves. *James Orr.*

13. *The people.* We have an illustration of the possibility of the migration of a whole nation even in the history of the last century, which records the sudden departure, under cover of a single night, of a whole nomadic people — four hundred thousand Tartars — who withdrew themselves from Russia and then made their way over several thousand miles of steppe from the banks of the Volga to the confines of the Chinese Empire. *George Rawlinson.*

13. *Fear ye not.* It was a fearful situation humanly speaking. On the one side was an unarmed and undisciplined host — men, women and children, cattle, baggage, animals intermixed — wholly unprepared for war, ignorant of it, without arms, without training, without discipline. On the other side was the trained bands, the veteran troops, which the great Rameses had so often led to victory. Let but Pharaoh give the word, and launch his armed force against the unarmed multitude, and how could these latter escape being slaughtered

like sheep, falling in heaps upon heaps under the swords, and the bows, and the spears, and the hoofs of the horses, and the chariot wheels? *George Rawlinson.*

15. *Wherefore criest thou unto me?* Can prayer ever be out of place? Not if we mean a prayerful dependent mental attitude toward God. But certainly, yes, if God has already revealed that for which we still importune Him, and we are secretly disquieted lest His promise should fail. It is misplaced if our duty is to be done, and we pass the golden moments in inactivity, however pious. Christ spoke of men who should leave their gift before the altar, unpresented, because of a neglected duty which should be discharged. *G. A. Chadwick.*

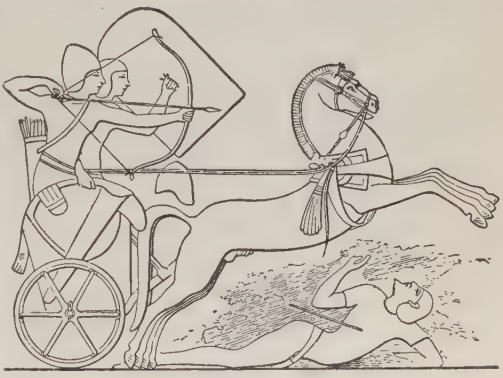
16. *Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.* When Paul and Barnabas went down from Antioch to Seleucia, there stood in the way of their conquest of Europe a far mightier barrier than a sea,— heathenism holding all her people in thrall, and entrenched behind the bulwarks of world-spanning Rome. But a way was opened up for them and their message right through the realm. When Luther went to Worms, he appeared to be marching into the very jaws of the imperial and papal power. But a way was made for this servant of God to pass through. When Morrison, the pioneer of Chinese Missions, began his work, a man tauntingly said, "Do you really think that you will make any impression on the idolatry of this great empire?" It was a shrewd thrust, for one man was trying to undermine the rooted paganism of three hundred millions. But Morrison marched on with the strong reply, "I expect God will." How inspiring these memories of trial and achievement! *John Smith.*

21. *Caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind.* Until lately I had no conception of how easily this could be accomplished; but our engineers on Lake Erie find that a southwest storm will blow the water down at Toledo eight feet and make it eight feet higher at Buffalo; while a strong wind in the other direction will produce an opposite effect — a total variation of about sixteen feet being produced under varying conditions. That was the method the Lord used, undoubtedly, for the deliverance of His people, and by it He opened a path twelve miles wide and one mile long; while Pharaoh's army followed just in time to catch the other wave as the water returned to its old place. *G. F. Wright.*

23. *The Egyptians went in after them.* We wonder that when the Egyptians reached the sea, and saw what they did see, they were not deterred from proceeding farther. They saw the sea divided. They could hardly mistake this for a mere natural phenomenon. It ought to have convinced the Egyptians that it was the result of God's special providence, and intended for the protection of the Israelites. They saw the cloud that went with Israel move to the rear, obviously with the design of intercepting their pursuit. There was the danger, which could not but present itself to them, of being overwhelmed by the returning sea. What infatuation possessed the Egyptians, prompting them to enter the sea? Having engaged in the pursuit, it would be deemed a point of honor not to desist from it, so long as the faintest chance of success remained. They had gone too far to retreat now at the water's edge. Fury and disappointment would possess them, as, in the very hour of their fancied triumph, they saw their prey thus elude them. Was Pharaoh and his mighty host to be thus mocked and set at naught — thus suddenly reined up and baffled? What would Egypt think of her warriors if, setting out on such an expedition, they returned humiliated and empty-handed? At all hazards Israel must be pursued. There was a chance of getting through. The distance was short; the way lay open; if Israel had

got across, so might the Egyptians. On this chance, on the spirit of gambling, they would stake everything. What havoc have these same motives — a false sense of honor, a spirit of uncalculating rage, the headstrong gambling disposition,— played in the history of the world! *James Orr.*

23. *All Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.* In verses 6 and 7 the pursuing force is described as composed entirely of chariots. This is entirely in conformity with the existing testimony of the monuments, which exhibit no kind of military force but war-chariots and infantry — no cavalry, properly so called, that is, warriors on horseback. But few horsemen are represented at all on the monuments and these are not Egyptians, but foreigners. In a hot pursuit like this the infantry could take no part. It is true that in verses 18 and 26 we read of "chariots and horsemen" and in verse 23 of "horses, chariots, and horsemen," but it has been shown grammatically that "horses" are those of the chariots, and the "horsemen" (properly "riders") those who rode them. The war-chariot of the Egyptians was of very light construction, and drawn by two horses. They usually carried two persons, one of whom managed the horses, while the other plied his weapons of war; but sometimes the warrior stood alone in his chariot, the reins lashed around his body. They must have been expert riders to discharge arrows standing in a chariot, with the horses in full gallop, while guiding them by the movements of the body. *John Kitto.*



Egyptian Chariot. From a Wall Painting

30. *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day.* Some things in a nation's history may be forgotten; of others, the memory is indelible. Could the English people ever forget the Normans and the Conquest; the Scottish, Bannockburn or Floddin, or the events of the Reformation; Americans, Bunker Hill or the Declaration of Independence? Yet these are small matters compared with what the Exodus, and the events which followed it, were to the Israelites. When we turn, accordingly, to the poetical and prophetical books of the Old Testament, we find that, amidst all the vicissitudes in their fortunes, the memory of the Exodus, with its attendant circumstances, never was obliterated, but remained fresh and green in the minds of the people as long as their natural life lasted. In song, and psalm, and prophecy, the echoes of this wonderful deliverance in Egypt and at the Red Sea ring down their history till its close. *James Orr,* in *The Problem of the Old Testament.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

17. *His horsemen.* Egypt was from the earliest ages famed for its horses, and the first mention of the horse in Scripture is when Joseph sold out the corn from the storehouses, in the first year of famine, in exchange for horses and other cattle. (Gen. 47.17.) . . . It is remarkable that the horse is scarcely

ever spoken of in Holy Writ except in connection with war and armies. After the Exodus the horse was intimately associated in the minds of the people with the oppression in Egypt, and the Divine Lawgiver expressly cautioned the king, whom in after years He might set over them, "He shall not multiply horses to himself" (Deut. 17.16), lest their possession should tempt them to wars of aggression. *H. B. Tristram,* in *Natural History of the Bible.*

20. *It was a cloud and darkness to them.* It is not likely that the Egyptians, viewing the cloud from a distance, were acquainted with its real nature. At the present day, in great caravans such as that of the annual pilgrimage of the Mohammedans to Mecca, a large cresset containing fire is borne aloft, before the moving host, the smoke of which by day, and the fire by night, forms an ensign, or way-mark, for the people, the most conspicuous, and therefore the most useful, that can be devised. The Egyptians probably thought the pillar of cloud something of this nature and were, therefore, not deterred by its presence from their enterprise. *John Kitto.*

24. *The morning watch.* In New Testament times the Jews divided the night-time into four watches, but in the Old Testament history mention is made of three only: the first, or "beginning of the watches," from sunset to ten P. M. (Lam. 2.19); the middle, from ten to two (Judg. 7.10); and the "morning," from two to sunrise. *Whedon.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Egypt, paragraph 49; Red Sea, paragraph 60; Pi-hahiroth, paragraph 60.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. "Behold, the Hebrew hath loosed his direst plague upon Egypt," exclaimed the royal scribe to Meneptah the Pharaoh; "Every firstborn in thy realm perished in the house of his father this night!"

The entire assembly about Pharaoh cried out, the most of them ran sobbing from the chamber. Instantly the outcry and clamor in the palace broke forth again, Meneptah staggered away in frenzy.

"Send them hither," he cried hoarsely, waving his arms toward a white-faced courtier that had stood his ground. "Send them hither — the Hebrews, Moses and Aaron! Israel shall depart! I have ruined Egypt, I have slain mine heir, and now the blow of the firstborn of all my kingdom is upon my head!"

A murmur ran through the assembly. "The Hebrews!" They came slowly, the two brothers. Egyptians in all attitudes of entreaty cumbered their path — Egyptians, rich, proud, powerful, on their faces to enslaved Israel! Meneptah staggered forward. "Rise up and get you forth from among my people," he besought them, "both ye and the children of Israel, and go and serve the Lord as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds as ye said, and be gone; and bless me also!"

Great was the fall for a Pharaoh to pray a blessing from the hands of a slave; great was his humility to kneel to them. But there was no triumph, no exultation on the faces of the Hebrews. Aaron, with his bearded chin on his breast, looked down on the head of the shuddering, pleading monarch; but Moses, after sad contemplation of the humbled king, raised his head and with the words, "It is well," he turned and, with his brother, disappeared into the

dusk of the long corridor. The expression, the mode of departure, seemed to indicate that the Israelites doubted the stability of the king's intent. *Elizabeth Miller,* in *The Yoke.*

For Older Pupils. There may appear, to current modes of thought, difficulties in the way of accepting this incident. But they are as nothing to those in the way of its rejection. For, not to discuss many historical points which suggest themselves, how are you to account for the immense impression of such a mighty deliverance, which lived on in a nation for many centuries? The wonder and awe of this divine act are fresh in the minds of Micah and Habakkuk. The Psalms exult in the recollection of God's mighty power. Now among the things which can not be manufactured is historic consciousness — convictions, pulses of wonder, elements of awe which have entered into the soul of a people, expressing themselves in literature and life and escaping in all kinds of unstudied ways. *John Smith, Permanent Message of the Exodus.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Wherefore Criest Thou Unto Me? Speak Unto the Children of Israel That They Go Forward

The Message given Moses. Moses received a message from God to cease his spiritual struggle and march boldly forward into the Red Sea. It was from the inward struggle that he gained his heroic confidence; but the time had now come for action. There is a time to pray and a time to act. "We could not allow him to be an orator who had the best thoughts, and who knew all the rules of rhetoric, if he had not acquired the art of using them," wrote Dryden. We could not allow him to be a Christian who had high thoughts about God, and who knew all the rules and principles of life received from Him by prayer and meditation on His word, if he had not acquired the art of using them. Devotion must lead to resolute action. Forward to the Red Sea!

Indolent Emotion. Fervor is valuable when it is set to work. The lightning goes careering through the sky, but we have harnessed it to tram cars nowadays, and made it carry our letters and light our rooms. Fervor of Christian spirit is all right when it is yoked to Christian work, and made to draw what else is a heavy chariot. It is not emotion, but it is indolent emotion, that is the curse of much of our fervent Christianity. There is first of all to be the receiving of the divine power, there is next to be the applying of it. They have been building a gigantic dam in Upper Egypt. It is in vain that the waters from the upper lands are piled behind it and stored there, or brought down through all the valley of the Nile, unless each peasant leads the water into his own little plot, and carefully directs it round the roots of his own crops. You have the stream, see to it that your garden is watered. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Perfected Emotion. A group of men wearing the Oxford gowns bent themselves over their Greek Testaments until they learned the mind of God that gave the best thoughts of the race. They bowed themselves in prayer until the Spirit of God swept over them and they shared the best affections of the race. They studied the plan, the mind, the motives of Jesus until His plans and motives became theirs. Then out of the jails and the mines, out between England's green hedge-rows, these Oxford men went and set the tides of spiritual power to flooding the world. If you are worthy successors of these men you will think

the great thoughts, share the great affections, and possess the vastest plans. It is not enough that you accept the best thoughts of your age. It is not enough that you shall feel. The outcome of thought and feeling must be action. *William F. McDowell.*

II Darkness to the Egyptians, Light to the Israelites

The Same Cause, Different Effects. The same cloud which gave light to the Israelites was a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians. The same sunshine melts the wax and hardens the clay. The same sunshine of God's presence softens and melts the heart of Israel and hardens and petrifies the heart of Egypt. The same experience to-day mellows the child of God and hardens the impenitent! The ark which slew the Philistines and cast down Dagon brought blessing to the house of Obed-Edom. As the course of Providence makes one man a friend and another an enemy of God, so the Gospel message is a "savour of life unto life, or of death unto death." . . . So the revival of religion brings men to God and drives men away from God. So the sermon of John must make Herodias a penitent or a more obdurate sinner. The Child was sent (it was the same Child) for the fall and for the rising of many. *Jesse W. Brooks.*

The Brazen Serpent a Help and a Hindrance. The brazen serpent was erected in the wilderness and the people, looking upon it with faith, lived, although bitten by serpents. Among the traditions of the Jews is one in regard to this brazen serpent. "Moses said, 'This serpent is a stumbling block to the world.' God answered, 'Not at all; it shall be for punishment to sinners; and life to upright men.'" In the days of Hezekiah that brazen serpent had become to the children of Israel an idol before which they burned incense, and therefore Hezekiah broke it in pieces and called it *Nehustan, a piece of brass.*

Christ a Stumbling-block and the Power of God. "We preach Christ crucified," says Paul, "unto Jews a stumbling-block and unto Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." The typical Jew was looking for a Messiah who would come in the glory and majesty of a worldly conquerer; the humble and crucified Nazarene was to him a stumbling-block, he could not see in Him the Power of God. And the typical Greek would test his gods by a fine-spun formula of reason; to him the doctrine of the crucified Christ is ridiculous, he could not see in Him the Wisdom of God. To those that are called, however, both Jews and Greeks, the crucified Christ is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. They that are called by the preaching of the Gospel, the genuine Christians, know by their own experience that Christ is Power and Wisdom. How can one know what scholarship means? Can he know by reading a list of subjects which scholars study or by knowing personally the scholars themselves? It is only by being a scholar that one really knows what scholarship means. It is only by being a Christian that one can know the Power of Christ. By living a life which begins to do what Christ was always doing we gain a knowledge of His nature. Not by studying Christ alone, but by doing His will, do we attain to an understanding of Him. The complement of obedience is understanding. It rests with us whether Christ shall be a stumbling-block or a marvelous power in our lives. The question is one which we must decide for ourselves.

III Israel saw the Egyptians Dead upon the Sea Shore

Do We believe in the Death of Our Egyptians? What is your Egyptian? . . . Dare to believe that your enemy may die, that the prejudice or the covetousness may absolutely pass out of existence, and the nature be absolutely free — sure no doubt to meet other enemies and to struggle to the end, but done with that enemy for ever, with that Egyptian finally dead upon the sea shore. . . . My friends, get something done! Do not go on for ever in idle skirmishing with the same foe. Realize who your chief enemy is. Cry out to God for strength. Set your face resolutely to a new life in which that enemy shall have no part. Go out and leave it dead. Plenty of new battles and new foes, but no longer that battle and that foe! Get something done! May He who overcame, not merely for Himself, but for us all, give you courage and make you sharers in His victory and in the liberty which He attained. *Phillips Brooks.*

"Forgetting the things behind, and reaching forth to the things before." It is the figure of a racer, running for a prize. Three or four years ago over twenty thousand excited people watched a lad running full speed the length of a field. The papers the next morning were full of his praise, because he had made this great run successfully. Meeting the young man some months later I asked him how he had felt when he was making that famous run. He said that the only sound he was conscious of while he was running down the field — where really those twenty thousand excited people were filling the air with indescribable clamor — was the quick footsteps of the runner behind him, who was trying to overtake him. He said the impulse was almost irresistible to turn his head and see whether this other man was gaining; but then the thought flashed through his mind of another great race where the leader did glance over his shoulder, and it lost him the race; and so my friend had kept his face straight forward and won.

"Forgetting the things behind;" for your use of your memory might be like looking over your shoulder. We speak of a tenacious memory, but what is it tenacious of? Of the treasures of the past that we need to carry forward with us into the future? — that is memory's use. But the phrase might mean "tenacious of the man," holding him back and chaining him to the dead past, putting him out of the future race altogether — that is memory's abuse. Now our text warns us against just this abuse of the memory, teaching us how to break that chain and to forget the things that ought to be left behind. . . .

The armies of Prussia under the great Frederick had overcome the world. Fifty years later, still living on those glorious memories, and looking backward, the armies of Prussia met Napoleon and there was no measure to the humiliation he inflicted on them. Again, a little more than fifty years and Prussia, turning away from the past, forgetting both the glory and the shame, setting her face forward, again meets another Napoleon; and all the world knows what happened at Sedan in the year 1870. Forgetting the things that are behind; forgetting your old failures; forgetting your old successes; not as if I had already attained; not as if I were already perfect; reaching out ahead; forward — that is the rule for successful running. *William R. Richards* in *God's Choice of Men.*

Dead History. There are a great many people who move encumbered with as much impedimenta as the Persian armies which the Greeks once destroyed. They leave nothing behind them; their mistakes, blunders, and failures are carried along from day to day as if they were priceless possessions instead of

being shells which ought to have been thrown by the wayside long ago, after the fruit of experience had been taken from them. There is a grace in forgetting as well as in remembering; there is a genius in knowing what to discard as well as keep. No man of conscience can forget his mistakes; but he does not carry them with him. What he does carry is the experience which has come to him through them,—the strength, the wisdom, the grace of character, which has been developed by what they have brought or what they have taken away. A man's real life is always before him; the past is only valuable for what we can learn from it. *Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. To-morrow is a new day; you shall begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense. *Emerson.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Worship is no worship which does not lead to action. *Symonds.*

Perception and intellect are for the sake of conduct. *Faunce.*

See the proofs of God's power in the Bible, and prove that power for yourself in yourself. *Babcock.*

Forget mistakes; organize victory out of mistakes. *Robertson.*

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps on the sea
And rides upon the storm. *Cowper.*

It is not by regretting the irreparable that true work is done, but by making the best of what we are. *Robertson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Heb. 10.31.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and be not afraid. Isa. 12.2.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness. Psa. 112.4.

Fire and hail; snow and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word. Psa. 148.8.

To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. 2 Cor. 2.16.

Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Psa. 50.15.

This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3.13, 14.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

If you see in your providential surroundings only the cloud and the darkness, then it is high time for you to understand that you are yourself upon the wrong side, and that instead of being numbered among the people of God, you are still lingering in the camp of His enemies, the Egyptians. *Jesse W. Brooks.*

ISRAEL'S ESCAPE FROM EGYPT

THE LESSON STORY

We have reached the climax in this absorbingly interesting and dramatic narrative of the escape of the Israelites from Egypt. They were encamped on the sea-shore, and Pharaoh, thinking he had them at his mercy, sent his chariots and horsemen in pursuit. What could they do, this crowd of faint-hearted bondmen, east of them the sea, south and west of them the mountains, and north of them Pharaoh's host? "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" they complain to Moses. With heroic confidence in God's might, Moses heartened his despondent people. "Look at the black mass of pursuing Egyptians," he said to them; "ye see them to-day — ye shall see them no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you."

The mysterious pillar moved between the camp of the Israelites and that of the Egyptians and kept them apart all night, for while it gave light to the Israelites it brought darkness to the Egyptians. Rod in hand, Moses advanced to the sea, for God had said, "Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward"— straight into the sea! He stretched forth his hand,— for he was a co-worker with God, and as was said of Joseph in prison, whatsoever was done, he was the doer of it. Then, "The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind," and the Israelites passed over on dry ground. The Egyptians attempted to follow, but "the Lord troubled them" and they became panic-stricken; they tried to turn round and regain the western shore, but their chariot wheels were caught in the mire and interlocked with one another, and the waters returned and overwhelmed them. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.

On the Arabian shore they sang a song of thanksgiving and triumph.

I will sing unto the Lord,
For He hath triumphed gloriously:
The horse and the rider
Hath He thrown into the sea.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Mediate miracles.

2. Without a Moses the Exodus is inconceivable, and God always achieves His purpose through the providential man. *G. A. Chadwick.*

3. The Egyptian must die. I recognize in many a frantic cry the great, growing conviction of mankind that nothing which ought not to be need be. I hear in many hoarse, ungracious tones man's utterance of his conviction that much which his fathers thought was meant to cultivate their patience by submission, is meant also to cultivate their courage by resistance till it dies. *Phillips Brooks.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

If you are to have a written review, assign the topics to-day and let the papers be read in class next Sunday. An interesting review may be held by asking your pupils to come prepared to tell one lesson story, and assign a different lesson to each scholar.

REVIEW

Read Psalm 106.1–12

Golden Text for the Quarter

When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. Isaiah 43.2.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF GENESIS XXVIII TO EXODUS XV

Lesson I. Isaac does not wish Jacob to marry a Canaanite wife, and Rebekah wishes him to escape Esau's vindictive anger, hence he is sent to his mother's family at Padan-aram. By his parting blessing Isaac makes him the inheritor of God's special promise to Abraham. As Jacob journeys toward Haran night overtakes him, and with a stone for a pillow he falls asleep on a hillside. In his dream he beholds a ladder whose top reaches Heaven, and there are angels ascending and descending on it; he hears the voice of God who renews to him the promise made to Abraham, and promises to be with him wherever he goes. "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not," are Jacob's words on awakening. In commemoration of the beautiful vision he sets up the stone which has been his headrest, for a pillar, and anoints it with oil. The place he names Bethel, the House of God, and solemnly vows that if God will be with him he will accept Him as his God and will give to Him a tenth of his possessions.

Jacob proceeds to Haran and finds a home with Laban, his mother's brother. Seven years he serves Laban for his daughter Rachel, and when deceived and given Leah, the elder daughter, in marriage instead, he serves yet seven years for Rachel. At the end of twenty years he has secured great herds and flocks, and starts to return to his early home. With him are all his sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, and Joseph.

Lesson II. As Jacob proceeds on his journey he begins to fear the meeting with Esau, whom he had so greatly wronged, and he sends messengers to him. They return with the news that Esau is approaching with four hundred men. Jacob is distressed; he is certain that Esau is coming to kill him. He divides his company into two bands, hoping that if one is taken the other will escape, and sends drove after drove of animals to Esau as presents, hoping thus to propitiate his wrath. Very humbly he prays to God for help. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies which thou hast shewed unto thy servant," he says. Alone by the brook Jabbok he remains and wrestles all night with a mysterious combatant; at daybreak the hollow of his thigh is out of joint. Yet Jacob still clings to his adversary, and says, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel," is the answer, "for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." "I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved," Jacob declares, and therefore calls the place Peniel, the Face of God.

The meeting with Esau proves a friendly one, and Jacob goes on in peace to Succoth. At Shalem, a city of Shechem, he erects his tents and builds an altar. Thence he journeys to Bethel and builds there an altar also. On his way from Bethel to Edar, Benjamin is born not far from Bethlehem, and Rachel dies. We next find him at Hebron with his father Isaac. There Jacob stays after Isaac's death.

Lesson III. Of all his sons Joseph is his father's favorite. His brothers hate Joseph on this account, and also because of his dreams which he repeats, for they see in these dreams his superiority. Jacob sends his older sons to pasture his flocks at Shechem, and later sends Joseph to see how they are prospering. Joseph learns that they have gone on to Dothan and follows them. They see "this dreamer," as they call him, approaching, and conspire to kill him, and then see "what will become of his dreams." Reuben counsels them not to kill him but to cast him into a deep pit. This they do, and while they are feasting they see a company of Ishmaelites approaching and decide, on Judah's advice, to sell him as a slave. But meanwhile, Midianite merchantmen have discovered the lad, and releasing him from his prison they sell him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. By them he is taken to Egypt. His brothers dip his coat of many colors, a special gift from his father, in the blood of a goat and carry it back to Jacob. Jacob thinks wild beasts have killed Joseph, and mourns his death, refusing to be comforted.

Joseph is sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, and in his household he is highly esteemed for his faithful services until Potiphar's wife falsely accuses him and he is put in prison.

Lesson IV. The keeper of the prison finds Joseph equally faithful and puts him in charge of all the prisoners. Pharaoh's butler and baker are brought there and Joseph serves them. Each one has a dream which no one can interpret. Joseph tells them that the interpretation of dreams belongs to God, and with His aid he will explain them. The butler has dreamed that he saw a vine with three branches which budded and blossomed and bore fruit, and he pressed the juice from the graps into a cup and gave it to Pharaoh. The dream means, Joseph tells him, that in three days the butler will be restored to his former office. "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and make mention of me to Pharaoh," Joseph begs him, "for I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."

Joseph interprets the baker's dream to mean that he will be beheaded. Both interpretations prove true, but the butler forgets Joseph until Pharaoh has a dream which greatly troubles him and no one can explain it. He has seen seven fat kine come from the river only to be devoured by seven lean kine, and seven good ears of corn devoured by seven blasted ears. Then the butler remembers Joseph's ability to interpret dreams, and he is sent for. The dream has been sent by God, Joseph tells Pharaoh, to warn him what he must do. The seven good kine and good ears are seven years of plenty, and the seven poor kine and poor ears are the seven years of famine which will follow. Let Pharaoh appoint a wise man to store away the produce of the years of plenty that there may be enough for the years of famine.

Lesson V. Pharaoh approves of Joseph's words, and is certain that he can find no other so wise as he to carry out the work. Accordingly he makes Joseph second only to him in power; arrays him in fine vestments, puts a gold

chain about his neck, and gives him his signet ring, and has him ride in his second chariot. The daughter of the priest of On becomes Joseph's wife. In the seven plenteous years Joseph gathers up food "as the sand of the sea."

Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, are born. During the seven years of famine the people of Egypt and of other lands come to Joseph for food. Jacob sends his ten sons to Egypt to buy corn and Joseph recognizes them. He severely tests their loyalty to their father and to Benjamin. With difficulty Jacob is persuaded to allow Benjamin to go with them on their second trip to Egypt, for Joseph has kept Simeon as hostage and has told them they can have no more corn unless Benjamin comes with them. Joseph threatens to keep Benjamin, and Judah pleads most eloquently in his behalf.

Lesson VI. Joseph can dissemble no longer. Sending away the courtiers present, he makes himself known to his bewildered brothers. "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" he asks, but his brothers, overcome with surprise and fear, can not answer him. "Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before thee to preserve life." With these and similar words he reassures them, and bids them go back for Jacob his father that he may care for him during the remaining years of famine. Thus Jacob and all his household are brought into Egypt, and are settled in Goshen where there is good pasturage. Before Jacob's death he blesses Joseph's two sons and gives Joseph through them a double portion in Israel. Joseph and his brothers carry out their father's last wish to be buried in Canaan. On their return his brothers, fearing that now their father is dead Joseph will punish them for their treatment of him in his youth, send messages to beg his forgiveness. "Ye thought evil against me," Joseph tells them; "but God meant it unto good. Now therefore fear ye not." Before Joseph dies in a good old age he makes the children of Israel promise to carry his bones back to Canaan when they go to take possession of the land promised them.

Lesson VII. Four centuries have passed and the "seventy souls" that came to Egypt have become a great multitude, so great that the new Pharaoh who "knows not Joseph" fears they will join their enemies and leave the land. He determines to "deal wisely with them," and putting taskmasters over them makes them build the treasure cities of Pithom and Raamses. "But the more they afflict them the more they multiply and grow." Then the Egyptians make their bondage more grievous, giving them hard tasks in brick making and in the fields.

Lesson VIII. Pharaoh has ordered that every male child born to the Israelites shall be cast into the river, but there is one babe which is concealed for three months. His mother then puts him in an ark of bulrushes which she has made water-tight and leaves him among the reeds of the Nile with an older daughter to watch. The daughter of Pharaoh comes down to the river, and, finding the ark, is moved with compassion for this Hebrew child. His sister is allowed to call a Hebrew woman as nurse, and she calls his mother, who, at the command of Pharaoh's daughter, cares for him till he is old enough to be brought back to the daughter of Pharaoh. He receives the name of Moses and is instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. At heart he is a Hebrew still, and when one day he sees an Egyptian strike a Hebrew he kills the Egyptian. The next day he attempts to settle a strife between two Hebrews and one of them turns upon him with these words, "Intendest thou to kill me as thou

killedst the Egyptian?" To escape the wrath of Pharaoh when he learns of the deed, Moses flees to Midian.

In Midian Moses marries Zipporah the daughter of Reuel the priest, and remains there in the wilderness forty years. Meanwhile the oppression of the children of Israel in Egypt grows worse and they cry to God for help.

Lesson IX. In caring for his father's flocks Moses leads them to Horeb. Here a wonderful sight meets his eyes, for he beholds a bush on fire, but yet not consumed. As he turns aside to discover its meaning, he hears a voice calling him, and receives God's commission to go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt to the land promised them, a land "flowing with milk and honey." Moses disclaims his ability: "Who am I that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt," he says, but God promises to be with him. "What shall I tell the children of Israel is Thy name," Moses asks. "I AM THAT I AM" is the answer; "tell them I AM hath sent me unto you."

Moses remonstrates further. The people will not listen to him. God gives him power to work certain miracles. He is still loth to go and pleads that he is slow of speech, but God tells him that his brother Aaron shall speak for him. Together with Aaron, who meets him on the way, Moses goes to Pharaoh and asks him to let the Israelites go, but the only result of his intercession is that the tasks of the people are increased. Plague after plague is then sent upon the Egyptians, but Pharaoh refuses to let the Israelites go.

Lesson X. The last affliction is promised, the death of the firstborn of the Egyptians, and after that Pharoah will not only be willing but will be anxious to have the Israelites leave Egypt. The fatal night has come. As God commanded, Moses has directed the people to sacrifice a lamb without blemish and put some of its blood on the lintel and door-posts, that the destroying angel of the Lord may not enter their houses. This sacrifice of the passover lamb on the tenth day of the month Abib is to be an ordinance for ever, Moses teaches them, and they are to explain to their children that it commemorates the time when the Lord "passed over the house of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians."

It happens as foretold. At midnight there is a great cry in the land of Egypt, for all the firstborn are slain. Pharaoh sends for Moses in haste and bids him be gone. At once the great army starts, "about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children, and a mixed multitude also with them; their flocks and herds, even very much cattle." From Rameses to Succoth they journey, and thence to Etham on the edge of the wilderness. Their guide by day is a pillar of cloud and by night a pillar of fire. By Pi-hahiroth between the mountain and the sea they encamp. Pharaoh thinks they can not escape and pursues them with six hundred chariots. As the children of Israel see them coming they cry out in their fear to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?"

Lesson XI. "Fear not," says Moses to the frightened company, "the Lord shall fight for you." The pillar of cloud moves backward and remains all night between the two camps, a cloud of light to the Israelites but a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians. God directs Moses to stretch his rod out over the sea. He then "causes the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that

night and makes the sea dry land." The Israelites cross safely and the Egyptians pursue, but the chariot wheels come off, and the returning waters overflow the Egyptians. "Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses."

OUTLINE OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS

I. The Beginnings of God's Chosen People.
   1. The need of vision.
   2. The need of conversion.
   3. The sin of envy.
   4. The virtue of faithfulness.
   5. The reward of faithfulness.
   6. The virtue of forgiveness.

II. The Beginnings of the Hebrew Nation. Bondage and Deliverance.
   7. Slavery.
   8. A Deliverer Saved.
   9. A Deliverer Called.
   10. The Passover.
   11. The Escape.

No.	Titles.	Golden Texts.	My Lesson
I.	J.'s V. a. G.'s P.	Behold, I am	God sees me.
II.	G. G. J. a. N. N.	Rejoice, because	Have I a new name?
III.	J. S. b. H. B.	For where	I will not be envious.
IV.	J. F. i. P.	Be thou faithful	I will be faithful in my daily life.
V.	J. t. W. R. i. E.	If any of you	I will seek true wisdom.
VI.	J. F. H. B.	Be ye kind	I will forgive others.
VII.	I. E. i. E.	Then they cried	The Lord is my Helper.
VIII.	C. a. E. o. M.	Moses was learned	I will try to help others.
IX.	M. C. t. D. I.	And he said	God calls me.
X.	T. P.	When I see	Christ died for me.
XI	I.'s E. f. E.	Thus the Lord	I will trust in God.

A BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Titles	Outlines	Lessons
1. Jacob's Vision and God's Promise.	Stairway to Heaven. Stone of Bethel. Solemn vow.	Since God Sees me I must Strive to do right.

Titles	Outlines	Lessons
2. God gives Jacob a New Name.	**P**rayer for help. **O**werful wrestler. **P**rince with God.	**M**y trust shall be in **M**y Saviour and not in **M**yself.
3. Joseph sold by His Brothers.	**D**reams of power. **D**eadly hatred. **D**astardly sin.	**E**nvy leads **E**arly to hatred and **E**ven to crime.
4. Joseph Faithful in Prison.	**I**mprisoned unjustly. **I**nvariably faithful. **I**nterpreter of dreams.	**I**ngratitude is **I**ntolerably wicked **I**n the sight of God.
5. Joseph the Wise Ruler in Egypt.	**R**oyal favor. **R**egal garments. **R**esponsible position.	**F**aithful service **F**or God is **F**inally rewarded.
6. Joseph forgives his Brothers.	**A**mazing revelation. **A**ssurance of forgiveness. **A**ccusing consciences.	**W**e must **W**illingly forgive as **W**e hope to be forgiven.
7. Israel enslaved in Egypt.	**V**ast numbers. **V**iolent treatment. **V**ain efforts.	**T**rials and troubles **T**each us to **T**rust in God's help.
8. Childhood and Education of Moses.	**B**abe saved. **B**oy taught. **B**rutality punished.	**B**e willing to **B**ear the **B**urdens of others.
9. Moses called to deliver Egypt.	**B**urning bush. **B**ehest of God. **B**lessed name.	**S**ee God in common **S**ights and **S**how Him in common deeds.
10. The Passover.	**P**assover lamb. **P**assed by. **P**assionate mourning.	**S**alvation from sin **S**ecured by the **S**acrifice of our Saviour.
11. Israel's Escape from Egypt.	**F**ear not. **F**ortunate escape. **F**oes slain.	**L**et us **L**earn to trust the **L**ord and fear not.

A WORD PICTURE REVIEW FOR YOUNG PUPILS

After picturing the scene of each lesson, let the pupils give its title and golden text and answer a few questions in regard to it.

Lesson I. Day is just beginning to dawn upon a rocky hillside. There is nothing to be seen save rocks and bushes. Suddenly one of the seeming rocks rolls over and stands up, and proves to be a man. He sets a stone upright, packs other stones and dirt around it, and pours something upon the top of it.

Lesson II. It is midnight, and by the light of gleaming torches women and children and struggling animals are splashing through the water of a brook.

Two men are wrestling alone near the same brook. One of them disappears and the other limps away but his face has a very happy look.

Lesson III. Here are many scenes. A lad talking to a group of men who surround him. The same lad older grown alone in a field. A company of men feasting. A caravan on its way across the desert and this lad one of the company. A man holding a garment stained with blood and weeping bitterly.

Lesson IV. A prison scene where two men are listening eagerly to another man.

Lesson V. In a beautiful palace a man is seated on a throne while before him other men are standing; they are putting a chain around the neck of a man who is arrayed in fine garments.

Lesson VI. I see a beautiful room and a group of rough looking men who look strangely out of place there. The one who must be the master of the house has his arms about a younger man and is weeping, and the others are looking on in amazement.

Lesson VII. What a multitude of men! Men everywhere, each one busy, each one stooping over some task or hurrying away with a heavy load, except a few men here and there who hold lashes in their hands, some of whom are using them upon the bare backs of others.

Lesson VIII. In the first scene I see an infant in a queer looking cradle afloat on a great river. There are ladies approaching it, and a short distance away stands a little girl. The next scene is out in the desert. Two angry men are facing a third one who is talking to them, but he suddenly turns and hastens away.

Lesson IX. Here I see another desert scene, but there is some grass on which flocks are feeding, and there is a bush aflame and by it a man standing in great surprise.

Lesson X. I see a man striking the top and sides of his door with a branch. Then within the house I see a family eating, but all are standing and they look as if they are ready to start on a journey.

Lesson XI. In a great camp by the shore all is excitement and the people are pointing to a large company of horsemen who are approaching. Now it is morning and the scene is changed. The people are on the other side of the sea, and along the shore are strewn great numbers of dead bodies and broken wheels and bits of wood.

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

Why did Jacob leave his father's home? What vision did he have on his way to his mother's kindred? What did he say? What did he do with the stone that had been his pillow? Why? What solemn promise did he make?

How did Jacob try to make peace with Esau before he met him when on his way back to Canaan? What wonderful thing happened at the brook Jabbok? Why was Jacob's name changed?

What two dreams did the lad Joseph tell his brothers? Why did his brothers hate him? Where did his father send him when he was seventeen years old? What happened there? How did his brothers deceive their father?

What dreams did Joseph explain when he was in prison in Egypt? What request did he make of the butler? Did the butler remember it? What words of praise did Joseph deserve by his conduct in prison?

What was Pharaoh's dream? How did Joseph explain it? What was the result? What did Joseph then do?

What brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt? Why were they afraid when they learned that the governor was Joseph? What did Joseph tell them? What did he wish them to tell his father? When Jacob was dead why did the brothers ask Joseph to forgive them for the past?

After the Israelites had increased to a great multitude in Egypt what was the Pharaoh afraid they would do? How did he try to prevent it? What hard tasks were given the Israelites? What was the result?

Tell the story of the hiding and finding of Moses when a babe. What were the names of Moses' brother and sister? What did Moses do when he was a young man?

What did Moses do when he fled from Egypt? What wonderful sight did he see at Horeb? What was God's message to him? Did he want to obey?

What finally induced Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt? What did the Israelites do to prevent the same affliction from coming to their homes? Who had ordered this to be done? What question would the children ask in later years about the passover lamb? How was the question to be answered?

How were the Israelites guided on their journey from Egypt? Why did the Egyptians pursue them? Where did they find them? How did the Israelites cross the Red Sea? What happened to the Egyptians?

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS

What two prayers of Jacob are given in the lessons, and what does each one show as to his character? What instances of the erection of stones to commemorate an occurrence have we studied? What does the expression "The God of Bethel" mean?

What are the lessons of Jacob's wrestling at the brook Jabbok? Why did Jacob ask the name of his opponent? Did Jacob live up to his new name?

Where did Jacob settle on his return to Canaan? When and how were Joseph's dreams as a lad fulfilled? What two explanations may be given of the selling of Joseph?

What does the word *Pharaoh* mean? What is the meaning of the expression "Pharaoh shall lift up thine head?" How long was Joseph in Egypt as a slave and as a prisoner? What traits of character are shown by Joseph in the prison scene and in the palace scene?

What was the significance of Pharaoh's dream being double? Who were the Hyksos kings and when did they rule? What was the cause of the famine in Egypt? What have the Egyptian monuments shown in regard to the Bible narratives? What may be said for and against Joseph's treatment of the people of Egypt during the years of famine?

Why did not Joseph's brothers recognize him when they came to Egypt? How did he prove their loyalty to their father? Why were the Israelites settled in Goshen?

How had Abraham foreseen the afflictions of his descendants in Egypt? How many Israelites came into Egypt and how many left? Who probably was the Pharaoh of the Oppression? Who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus? What were some of the great works of Rameses?

What did Moses probably learn in Egypt? Did he do right in slaying the Egyptian? What traits of character did he show in his life at court?

How long was Moses in Midian? In what ways does God speak now? What traits of character did Moses show when the call came to him to deliver the children of Israel from bondage? What different names are applied to God and what is the distinctive meaning of each?

What plagues were sent to the Egyptians? Describe the events of the passover night. What feast was later connected with the passover? Where is the passover now kept? Give an account of Christ's last celebration of the passover.

Describe the course of the Israelites from Egypt to the wilderness of Sinai. What is a mediate miracle and what other such miracles besides that at the Red Sea can you recall?

A GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

What did the Hebrews call the land of Egypt? What was its extent? What was its natural southern frontier? Describe its surface. What was its area? How does this compare with Palestine? Describe the two divisions. What do you know about the Nile River? What is the climate of Egypt? What were its products?

What did the Egyptians worship? How far back does Egyptian history extend? Who was Manetho? Who was the earliest Pharaoh? What city did he found? When were the pyramids built? Who were the Hyksos rulers? Where was their capital? What connection had they with Israelitish history? What led the Pharaohs to extend their territory eastward? What Pharaoh was renowned for his conquests in the far East? Who is the best known Pharaoh? What connection had he with Israelitish history? What did he accomplish? Who was his son? What was his connection with the Israelites?

Where was Goshen? Why was this land chosen as the home of Jacob and his family? Where was Thebes? What was the largest city of Egypt? Where was On? What do you know about this city? Where was Zoan? What other name had it? Where were the cities which the Israelites built? Where did the Israelites start from when they left Egypt? Where did they first encamp? Describe their probable course to the Red Sea. At Pi-hahiroth what was there before them in each of the directions?

Draw an outline map of the Old Testament world and locate on it the cities connected with Jacob's life. Trace his journey from Canaan to Haran and back again.

Draw an outline map of the Old Testament world and locate on it the cities connected with Joseph's life. Trace his journey from Canaan to Egypt.

Draw a map showing the extent of Egyptian rule under Thothmes III.

Draw a map of Egypt and locate the chief cities of early times. Trace the route of the Israelites to the Red Sea.

A WRITTEN REVIEW

Write the life of Jacob.

Write the life of Joseph.

Tell the story of the Israelites in Egypt and their escape.

Write an account of the institution of the passover and of Christ's last passover.

Contrast Moses' life in Egypt and in Midian; Pharaoh and his court and

Jethro and his nomad tribe; the son of Pharaoh's daughter and the coarsely clad shepherd; the palace with its luxuries and the tent with its few necessaries; the bustle of the cities and the silence of the wilderness; the complicated idolatrous practices of the Egyptians and the simple religious rites of the Midianites; the life with princes and courtiers and the communion with self and with God.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read Chapters 8, 9, and 10 of first Corinthians. 2. Read Romans 15.16. 3. Is it always right to do what one thinks to be right? 4. What is the meaning of the word *wealth* in the twenty-fourth verse? Consult the dictionary. 5. What does *edify* mean? *Shambles?* 6. Where in the Old Testament is the 26th verse found? See a concordance. 7. What is the meaning of each of the questions in verses 29 and 30?

BETWEEN LESSON XI AND THE NEXT LESSON

On the other side of the Red Sea Miriam and the children of Israel sang a song of rejoicing. "Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea." After three days journey in the wilderness without water, the Israelites came to Marah. The water there was bitter, and the people murmured till Moses cast a tree into it and it became sweet. At Elim, their next stopping-place, palm trees and many wells were found.

TEMPERANCE LESSON

1 Cor. 10.23–33. (Read the chapter.) Commit v. 31.

Golden Text

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. Romans 14.21.

LESSON TEXT. 1 Corinthians 10.23–33

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.
24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth.*
25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience sake:
26 For the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.
27 If any of them that believe not bid you *to a feast,* and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.
28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:
29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience?
30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?
31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:
33 Even as I please all *men* in all *things,* not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

23. *All things.* The term applies to external acts in themselves indifferent, such as using this or that food. *Godet. Lawful.* Allowable, permissible. *Expedient.* Desirable, advisable. *Edify.* To instruct and improve, especially in moral and religious knowledge. *Webster.*

24. *But every man another's wealth* R. V., *but each his neighbor's good.* Our word *wealthy,* from Old English *wele* (weal), meant originally *welfare.*

25. *The shambles.* Tables or stalls in the public market place, or the market place itself. *Asking no questions for conscience sake.* Do not make it a matter of conscience to find out whether the meat has been offered to idols.

26. *For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.* A quotation from Psa. 24.1. Since everything belongs to God, meat consecrated to an idol is His also. "These words are used among the Jews as a thanksgiving at table."

28. *Eat not for his sake that shewed it.* This one has conscientious scruples about eating such meat, and as scruples should be treated with consideration, although you rightly think such meat may be eaten, abstain from eating lest

PAUL PREACHING TO THE ATHENIANS—*Raphael*

the other's conscience may be troubled by your eating, or the other may even be led to follow your example and eat, despite the dictates of his conscience. *For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.* This repetition of verse 24 is omitted from the Revised Version, as an interpolation.

29. *For why.* For what good purpose. *Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?* What do I gain by eating when my liberty will be censured by another? Such assertion of liberty is not worth while.

30. *For if I by grace be a partaker.* R. V., *if I partake with thankfulness.*

31. *Do all to the glory of God.* The question for the Christian is this: What will best make my brethren understand the love and holiness (the glory) of my heavenly Father? *Godet.*

32. *Give none offense.* R. V., *give no occasion of stumbling. Nor to the Gentiles.* R. V., *or to the Greeks.* The Greeks here represent all Gentiles; there were Jews, Gentiles, and Christians at Corinth.

33. *I please all men.* Compare 1 Cor. 9.19–23.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *My liberty.* A man says, I insist on living the life of a drunkard and a sot. Is that proof of his freedom? No; because if he were free he would set consequences at defiance. The day of reckoning would never come; but it does: it comes with a regularity and persistency that are none the less real because one man's constitution gives him a longer rope than another's. The harvest never can be different from the seed. We might just as well expect to sow weeds and reap corn. It is just as impossible. The world teems with good gifts for men, but they must be won on conditions — stringent, strict, hard conditions. Where, then, we say, is freedom; what does it mean? Obviously something very different from the meaning the fool puts upon it. It is not absolute permission to do just what you will, and escape consequences, but it is a manlier, better, and nobler thing; it is to see the highest interest, and pursue it. Anything that is held back by any means from its best interest is not a free agent. *Edward J. Purchase,* in *The Pathway of the Tempted.*

30. *Why am I evil spoken of.* The asyndeton itself proves that this verse reaffirms and explains the idea of the foregoing. It brings out still more forcibly the absurdity of the strong Christian's conduct by the revolting contradiction which would arise between the thanksgiving with which he partakes of the food offered him, and the wounding of his conscience testified by the blame of the meat. What! That for which a believer gives thanks, the other converts into a ground of defamation against him! "What sort of a religion is this?" the heathen would say, who was witness of both actions. *Godet.*

31. *Do all to the glory of God.* But we can not understand how "eating and drinking" and the great multifarious "whatsoever" of life, can be to the glory of God. No, we can not understand it when we think only of the acts themselves; considered thus, many of them are most undivine, most material, most unimportant acts. But the acts must be thought of in relation to the person who does them. . . . What we do does not make us what we are. What we do declares what we are. In every phase of action, in the whole territory of conduct, it is intended that doing shall disclose and affirm the quality of being. . . . Be kingly in your thought and you

shall be kingly in your deed. Child of a Royal Father remember whose you are and whom you serve. Kinsman of One first crowned with thorns, now crowned with many crowns, crown thyself, day by day, by doing all unto the glory of God. Let no man take thy crown, thy glorious crown of a consecrated conduct. Hold firmly on thine head, as thy royal right, the belief that whatsoever thou doest has a meaning and a value in the sight of God, which makes it a glory simply to live one's life. Crown thyself until He crown thee. *Charles Cuthbert Hall,* in *The Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice.*

32. *Give none offence.* We are reminded of the story related by Augustine. When his mother first came to Milan and found that the Church did not fast on the Sabbath, as she had been accustomed to do in Rome, she asked Ambrose, in great distress, what her duty was. He replied, "When I am in Rome I fast on the Sabbath; when I am here, I do not." This is the origin of the saying, "Do in Rome as the Romans do." *Thomas Charles Edwards.*

When Mr. Spurgeon noticed that the church officials had tried in vain to get three young men in the gallery to take off their hats, he stopped in the midst of his sermon and said:

"My friends, the other day I went into a Jewish synagogue and I naturally uncovered my head, but, on looking round, I perceived that all the rest wore their hats and so, not wishing to offend against what I supposed to be their reverent practice, though contrary to my own, I conformed to Jewish use and put on my hat. I will now ask those three young Jews up in the gallery to show the same deference to our Christian practice in the house of God, as I was prepared to show them when I visited their synagogue, and take off their hats."

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *This is offered in sacrifice unto idols.* Every meal was in a manner dedicated to the household gods by laying some portion of it on the family altar. Where one member of a heathen family had become converted, he would at once be confronted with the question, rising in his own conscience, whether by partaking of such food he might not be countenancing idolatry. On the occasion of a birthday, or a marriage, or a safe return from sea, or any circumstance that seemed to call for celebration, it was customary to sacrifice in some public temple. And after the legs and the entrails of the victim had been burnt on the altar, the worshiper received the remainder and invited his friends and guests to partake of it, either in the temple itself, or in the surrounding grove, or at his own home. Much of the meat offered in worship found its way into the common market, so that at any meal the Christian ran the risk of eating things sacrificed to idols. *Marcus Dods.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Is it wrong for a little girl to play with dolls? Of course not, you answer, but a writer in the *Sunday School Times,* who lives in Palestine, shows that it may be wrong for some girls to have dolls and play with them. Missionaries tell the heathen it is wrong to worship idols, she says. The heathen see the dolls which the missionaries' children play with, and they think they are household idols, such as they worship in their own

homes. Then they remember what the missionary has told them, and they say he is a liar, for he keeps idols at home while claiming that he does not believe in them. Ought not these girls to give up dolls for the sake of the people whom their father is trying to teach?

In a letter which Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth he teaches them this truth, that some things which are not wrong in themselves become wrong when they are misunderstood by others, or when they cause others to do what they think is wrong.

For Older Pupils. How many letters of Paul are there in the New Testament? His letter to the Corinthians was written from Ephesus, probably in 57 A. D., and seems to be in answer to one from them consulting him in regard to certain points about which they are in doubt. Chapters VIII, IX, and X answer their question in regard to the lawfulness of eating things which had been offered to idols. The Jews had many scruples about what they ate and also about the company with whom they ate. They were wont to inquire whether the fruit and herbs on the table had been tithed according to custom, and whether the meat had been offered to idols, and whether the animal had been torn by wild beasts, or strangled, or not killed in the manner prescribed. Paul bids them put away all such troublesome questions, for it is lawful for them to eat all things, but to concern themselves with the question whether by thus eating they give offense or cause to stumble some weaker brother.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Not All Things are Expedient

Christian Liberty is Limited. A good driver drives with his eye on every other driver in the street. It is not enough for me to drive my own horse and take care of my own wagon. I must look out for other people's horses and wagons as well. I must make calculation as to whether that man who is coming toward me will come so near to me, or so near. I must consider whether I can pass on this side or on that. I must keep in view the position of all the vehicles in the street and act accordingly. Unless I do these things I am not a good driver, and a man in carrying his own conscience must consider the consciences of others. He must see that in following the dictates of his own conscience he does not do violence to the consciences of other people. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Some Things which are Lawful but not Expedient. Innocent pleasures are always lawful, but to make life merely a search for pleasure is always inexpedient, for, a life of pleasure, as Bulwer has said, makes even the strongest mind frivolous at last. Competitive games are pleasurable and profitable in moderation, but when the preliminary training for them takes all one's time, and the excitement and danger connected with them are great, then they are harmful and inexpedient. Popularity, praise, honor, are all universally desired and rightfully so, but to make them the aim of one's striving is ignoble and debasing.

Jenny Lind's abandonment of the operatic stage thirty-seven years before her death, and consequent renunciation of wealth and praise, well illustrates the inexpediency of lawful good. A friend found her one day sitting on the

seashore, a Bible in her lap, her eyes fixed on a glorious sunset. They talked together a while, and then her friend asked a question she had long had in mind, why Madame Goldschmidt had given up the stage at the height of her popularity. "When every day," came the beautiful answer, "it made me think less of this (placing her hand on the Bible), and nothing at all of that (pointing to the sunset), what else could I do?"

The Question is not always whether a Thing is Wrong in Itself. Every now and then the conscience of men and women who lead easy, thoughtless lives, is stirred, and some one looks up anxiously holding up some one of the petty idlenesses in which such people spend their days and nights, and says, "Is this wrong? Is it wicked to do this?" And when they get their answer, "No, certainly not wicked," then they go back and give their whole lives up to doing this innocent little piece of uselessness again.

Ah, the question is not whether that is wicked, whether God will punish you for doing that. The question is whether that thing is keeping other better things away from you; whether behind its little bulk the vast privilege and dignity of duty is hid from you; whether it stands between God and your soul. If it does, then it is an offense to you, and though it be your right hand or your right eye, cut it off, pluck it out, and cast it from you. To put aside everything that hinders the highest from coming to us, and then to call to us that highest, which, nay, who is always waiting to come, this as the habit and tenor of a life, is noble. *Phillips Brooks.*

II Let Every Man seek Another's Wealth

Each Man for Himself. Some years ago an Atlantic steamer went down in the midst of the ocean. When the life boats were lowered there was a mad struggle; the ship's crew fought off the passengers and escaped in the boats. "But it was not an American ship;" "Thank God it was not an English ship," were the words uttered around the world. "Each for himself" may seem to be the rule of life followed, but the world stands aghast at such a brutal exhibition of the rule.

"Let every man seek his own wealth" was in reality the doctrine of the German philosopher, Frederick Nietzsche, a brilliant man, an intellectual giant. He taught that there were only two classes in the world, and the one class was of right the ruler of the other; the strong should not help the weak, the prosperous should not bear the burdens of the helpless, wealth should not aid poverty. "It seems almost as if the God whom Nietzsche denied, and the spirit of love which he denounced," says the *Youth's Companion,* "so ordered his death that it should be a direct and impressive answer to the teachings of his life; for at the last the powerful brain failed, and when insanity had settled upon this poor philosopher of pessimism, and he could no longer write or teach, it was one of those very charitable institutions which he had derided that received him, and within its friendly walls the end came in peace and bodily comfort."

The London *Spectator* charitably said: "What revelations God's minister of death has in keeping for such an unhappy soul!"

Welfare Work. This is a beautiful phrase, welfare work, which has been coined in recent years to describe a work being carried on by owners of large establishments. In some of the large dry goods stores there is a manager of

the welfare work who spends her time in looking after the interests of the girls employed, devising means to increase their comfort, and seeking in every way possible to make them happy and contented in their work. Great corporations vote considerable sums for their welfare work, and it is said that the United States Government has such a department for its Panama work.

There ought to be welfare work established in every home, and each one in the household should be a member of the committee in charge. Long ago Paul said, "Let every man seek another's welfare."

Bear Ye One Another's Burdens. In the legend of Siddhartha, which Edwin Arnold has turned into beautiful poetry, the story goes that the Prince was kept carefully in his palace, and from all knowledge of woe and pain. He should never know that there were tears, that there was sickness, that there was death. But the very wind brought him the story of the world's woes; his quick ear heard their music on the Æolian harp, and they sang to him a wail, and so he got his first knowledge of human sorrow. He wanted to enjoy and see the world, and his father issued a decree that all things that give offense or pain should be cleared from his path. But somehow it happened that one poor, wretched, miserable, palsy-stricken, blind beggar had been left by the wayside; the Prince saw him, looked on him, and turning to his attendants said, "What, are there such sights as this, such sounds as this, such men as this in the world? I will turn back and think of it." And he went out again, and again the path had been cleared for him that he should see no pain. But as he went, one suddenly fell down struck by mortal disease, and he saw the anguish and death. Then farther on he saw a funeral procession and a corpse borne to its burial, and he turned to his attendants and said, "What, do all men know sickness? Are all men finally borne to their death? Do heart-throbs come into all hearts? Do tears come into all eyes?" And he said, "I can not live in joy while my fellow creatures are living in suffering." And from all the strong attractions of his home, he went forth that he might study the problem of human suffering, that he might put his own shoulder under the burden that was bearing down on all the human race.

So it is that men's noble natures come to know that the world groaneth in pain together until now. So Paul turned his back on all the opportunities of quiet study, and on all the promotion and fame that beckoned him, in order that he might share with and cheer the sufferings of humanity. So Christ turned His back upon the glory He had with the Father, and came to earth that He might drink the cup of sorrow to its very dregs. So God knows His children, knows that we are dust; enters into our experience, and realizes our griefs and our struggles. *Lyman Abbott,* in *The Signs of Promise.*

III Abstinence for the Sake of Others

Interpret Christian Liberty in the Light of Christian Love. God told His people of old that when they built their flat-roofed houses, on which many an hour would be spent, they must build a battlement. If they did not, and any one fell off, his blood would be on the owner's head. . . . And who shall dare refuse, though he be strong and steady, to build battlements at dangerous edges of his life, lest a weaker brother may fall where he stood safe? Can any pleasure of "unchartered freedom," any pride of personal self-indulgence, justify the moral catastrophe which our self-confidence may provoke.

our example encourage? Better any barrier of long self-denial than another's blood through our lawless self-assertion. Let the brotherhood of Jesus Christ remember the weak brother, and interpret Christian liberty in the light of Christian love. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Who make the Gamblers? Doctor S. B. Alderson, in the *Herald and Presbyter,* quotes these words of a converted gambler uttered at a mass meeting in a church at Portsmouth, Ohio. "I have been in the saloon business, with a gambling room attached, for the last four years, and claim to know something about gambling. Perhaps you have never thought of it, but where do all the gamblers come from? They are not taught in the gambling dens. A "greenie" never enters one, because he knows that he will be fleeced out of everything he possesses in less than fifteen minutes. He has learned somewhere else before he sets foot inside of such a place. When he has played in the parlor, and has become proficient enough to win prizes among his friends, the next step with him is to seek out the gambling rooms, for he has learned, and now counts on his ability to hold his own. . . . I say, then, the parlor prize game is the college where gamblers are made and educated. For my part, I never could see the difference between playing for a piece of silver molded in the shape of money and silver molded in the shape of a cup or a thimble. The principle is the same, and wherever property changes hands over the luck of the cards, no matter how small is the value of the prize, I believe it to be gambling."

Of course not every one who plays cards for prizes is going to become a gambler, any more than every one who drinks a glass of wine is going to become a drunkard. There are multitudes of people to whom gambling and drinking are no temptation, but who can be sure until he tries it whether or not he is proof against these allurements? Who can know when he gives a prize to a friend or offers a glass of wine to another, that he is not helping to awaken in that friend a desire which will be to him a torment? Is it not better "neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth"?

Doctor Edward Eggleston gives this good advice to boys and girls: "Try to have a good time in the world. Get your pleasures always at your own and not at other people's expense. Let it always be good, honest, clean happiness with nothing wrong about it."

He Knew not His Power.

He toiled on the street for his daily bread,
Jostled and pushed by the surging throng.
"No one has time to watch," he said,
"Whether I choose the right or the wrong;
No one can be by me misled."

He chose the wrong, and thought no one cared:
But a child lost that day his ideal of strength;
A cynic sneered at the soul ensnared;
A weak man halted, faltered, at length
Followed him into the sin he had dared. *George Lee Burton.*

For the Sake of Others. I want every last ounce of influence that I can have with anybody, and if there is anything, I don't care how innocent, pure, or pleasant, that will hurt my influence with anybody, I am going to give it up.

One of the godliest ministers I ever knew, who smokes, was invited by a Christian woman to her home. When dinner was over her husband said to the minister, "Would you mind my smoking? Of course you don't smoke." "Yes, I occasionally smoke a cigar." No sooner had the minister lighted his cigar than the man hurried in to his wife and said, "Come and see your saint smoking on the front porch." And never could that minister reach him after that. *Evangelist Torrey.*

Doctor Talmage was in his youth a smoker. When he began his pastorate in Philadelphia, a member of his congregation called and, detecting the odor of tobacco, remarked that he would like to send the doctor some choice cigars. The box came the next day, but meanwhile Doctor Talmage had been meditating on the effect his smoking might have on his influence. He returned the box with this letter. "My dear Sir:—I have stopped smoking—quit to-day. T. De Witt Talmage."

Total Abstinence. A reason to be urged for total abstinence is, of course, its influence upon others. For myself, the mere fact that, at a moderate estimate, probably hundreds of men are annually carried, by the use of alcoholic liquor, into a condition in which they are of small or no value either to themselves or to society, seems to me to be a sufficient reason why I should throw the entire influence of my individual practice in favor of total abstinence. In no other way can one be certain that he is throwing the full weight of his influence against the evil of intemperance. The simple chance that my individual or family use of alcoholic liquors might be the occasion of starting another man in a custom that would mean absolute ruin to him, seems to me sufficient reason for total abstinence. *A College President.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Liberty is justice secured. *Horace Bushnell.*

Where there is most weal there is most wealth. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

Where conscience says, not "You must," but only "You may," then we must consider the effect our using our liberty will have on others. *Marcus Dods.*

The man who lives to please himself will find that he has a hard master. *Ram's Horn.*

He that allows himself everything that is permitted is very near to that which is forbidden. *Augustine.*

The love of Christ is the conducting medium to the love of all mankind. *Jowett.*

Altruism means other-ism: Do unto others as you would that men should do unto you. *Babcock.*

All liberties end where a mortal wrong begins. *Sylvester Scovel.*

Society makes haste to forget him who remembers only himself. *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

We are in this world to be good and to be good for something, and to have a good time when it does not interfere with, but rather helps, the "be good" and "do good." *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Let us specialize under the great appeal to lay down our lives for the brethren, and lay down some things much smaller, for the hope of being worth something to them. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

I am certain that the good of life can not lie in the possession of things which

for one man to possess is for the rest to lose, but rather in things which all can possess alike, and where one man's wealth promotes his neighbors. *Spinoza.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. Gal. 6.2.

In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Phil. 2.3, 4.

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. Rom. 15.1, 2.

For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. 1 Tim. 4.4, 5.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. Rom. 14.7.

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Matt. 15.11.

For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth. Rom. 14.2, 3.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's welfare. Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. These words are as comprehensive as Christ's two commandments "on which hang all the law and the prophets," for they embrace our duty to God and our duty to our neighbor. If these sayings of Paul were made doings of ours, what a revolution there would be in our daily lives! Let us practise them throughout the coming weeks and see how they alter our way of living.

THE LESSON STORY

In a letter to the Church at Corinth, Paul states the general rule that some things right in themselves may be wrong because of their effect on others, and every one should seek the welfare of others. Then he proceeds to apply this rule to a question of the Corinthians in regard to the lawfulness of eating meat which had been offered to idols. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," he says; "the offering of meat to idols does not change the fact that it belongs to God, and you may eat whatever is sold in the market place without asking whether it is or is not sacrificial meat. If you are at a feast eat whatever is set before you with a conscience free from all scruples. If, however, some one at the feast tells you that the meat has been offered to idols, then refrain from eating it, and thus avoid giving offense. The unbelieving might think that he who ate it sanctioned idols, or a believer present might consider it sinful to eat such meat, or he might even be led by your example to eat despite his own conscience. The man who has no conscientious scruples should have regard for the conscientious scruples of another. Why

should I exercise my liberty of eating when by so doing I only bring it under the condemnation of another? Why should I allow myself to be evilly spoken of because of eating things which I might rightfully partake of with thanks? There is nothing to be gained by my exercising my right, and much to be lost." Concluding, Paul states a general principle which should guide them in all questions of Christian liberty: whatever they do — whether in eating or in drinking, or in anything else, it must be done so as to contribute to the glory of God, and not to give offense to others. Paul believed in reinforcing his words by his example, and since his aim had always been not to please himself but to seek the good of others, he could rightfully add, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Our responsibility in matters morally indifferent.

2. The majesty of the abstract principle of conscience.

3. How can we redeem society if we do not everywhere put ourselves on the constructive side of moral questions? If all the people did as we do in politics, amusements, temperance, Sabbath-observance, would the day be won for God or lost? *Maltbie D. Babcock.*.

4. Privilege brings responsibility. We are all socialists in the best sense. We believe in mutual action for the common good. We hold that the individual has his rights, but that he has no rights which are antagonistic to the welfare of other men and women who are honestly striving to secure the rewards of honest effort. Those who toil with their hands, or do work with their brains, or who live upon accumulated wealth, have common duties, and in a well-ordered society would harmoniously work together to the end that equal happiness might be the lot of all honest persons. *The Christian Register.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. On what previous occasions had the children of Israel murmured? (Ex. 5.21; 14.10–13, 15.23, 24.) 2. On what occasions were the Israelites furnished with a miraculous supply of water? (Ex. 17.1–6; Num. 20.1–11.) 3. What food which the Israelites had in Egypt is enumerated in Num. 11.5? 4. When did the cloud first appear? (Ex. 13.20–22.) 5. Why was Aaron the spokesman? (Ex. 7.1.) 6. Read the entire chapter and give all the directions concerning the use of the manna. 7. How was the manna prepared? (Num. 11.8.) 8. When did the supply of manna cease? (Ex. 16.35.) 9. What do you think about the character of the children of Israel? 10. How is Moses' meekness shown in the lesson? 11. When did Christ declare Himself to be the bread of life? (John 6.24–59.)

THIRD QUARTER

LESSON I — JULY 7

GOD FEEDS ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS

Exodus 16.1–15. (Read Ex. 15.22–18.27.) Commit v. 4.

Golden Text

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. John 6.51.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 16.1–15

1 And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

2 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:

3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

4 Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare *that* which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:

7 And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord; for that he heareth your murmurings against the Lord: and what *are* we, that ye murmur against us?

8 And Moses said, *This shall be,* when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what *are* we? your murmurings *are* not against us, but against the Lord.

9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the Lord: for he hath heard your murmurings.

10 And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.

11 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord your God.

13 And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there lay* a small round thing, *as* small as the hoar frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw *it,* they said one to another, It *is* manna: for they wist not what it *was.* And Moses said unto them, This *is* the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2. *The whole congregation murmured.* The third recorded murmuring. See Ex. 14.10–12 and Ex. 15.23, 24.

3. *Would to God.* R. V., *would that. By the hand of the Lord.* A reference to the last plague inflicted upon the Egyptians. *We did eat bread to the full.* It was the habit of the Egyptians to feed well those whom they employed in forced labors (Herodotus), just as slave owners commonly do their slaves. *Rawlinson.* (See Num. 11.5.)

4. *A certain rate every day.* R. V., *a day's portion every day. That I may prove them.* The test was whether they would keep the special regulations as to the way the gift could be used (see verses 16–30), and thereby rcognize God as the Giver. *Or no.* R. V., *or not.*

5. *They shall prepare.* See Num. 11.8.

6. *At even.* This refers to the quails, verses 12, 13.

7. *In the morning.* This refers to the manna, verse 13. *Ye shall see the glory of the Lord.* "Seeing" is synonymous with "knowing." Seeing the glory of Jehovah did not consist in the sight of the glory of the Lord which appeared in the cloud, as mentioned in verse 10, but in their perception or experience of that glory in the miraculous gift of flesh and bread. (Compare Num. 14.22.) *Delitzsch. What are we?* The people must feel, as did Moses and Aaron, that the murmurings were against the Lord.

9. *Come near before the Lord.* See the last clause of verse 10.

10. *The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.* See Ex. 13.21, 22.

13. *The host.* R. V., *the camp.*

15. *It is manna.* Scholars are not agreed as to the meaning of the Hebrew sentence. The Revised Version reads, *What is this? Wist.* Knew.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *They took their journey.* The Israelites moved with large households and supplies. They had their flocks and herds, their material and utensils for metal-working and weaving and embroidery. It would be unreasonable to look upon them as wholly dependent upon the manna on the one hand, or the mere natural growth of the desert on the other.

One thing is essential to an understanding of the Bible story of the Hebrew wanderings, and that is that the actual caravan march of the host in the desert was in all but a few days or weeks at the most. The resting at Elim, and again in the neighborhood of Sinai, was in the region which to-day, as then, is well-watered and comparatively fertile. And when the boundary of the Negeb was reached at Kadesh-barnea, and the people were turned back for a generation of desert life because of their lack of faith-filled obedience (Num. 14.33, 34), there is every reason to suppose that they were not set at marching up and down, and back and forth, in solemn array, for thirty-eight years and a half, as some of the uninspired commentaries and maps would indicate, but were simply left to live as the Arabs of that region live to-day — sowing and reaping their barley in the wadies that stretch away from the plains of 'Ayn Qâdis, southward and westward, and tending their flocks in the mountain passes on every side. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Oriental Social Life.*

1. *They came unto the wilderness of Sin.* The journey from the station at

Elim, or even from that on the Red Sea, could be performed in a day. At that time the route was kept in good condition by the Egyptians who worked the copper-mines at Sarbut el Khadin. *Cooke.*

4. *That I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.* God built the world to school us and train us up in it, and He undertakes Himself to be the Schoolmaster. He is not only mindful of us, visiting us occasionally to see what progress we make, but He is with us continually, pervading us within, unfolding us from within. . . . O, if it be much to be instructed by the best professors and most learned doctors of science in the world, how much more does it signify to be under the teaching of the all-perfect, all-knowing God! *Horace Bushnell.*

5. *It shall be twice as much as they gather daily.* The supply of manna has been variously explained; but though natural phenomena may indicate the direction in which miraculous aid was vouchsafed, they are inadequate, in their ordinary exhibition, to account for the whole facts recorded. One theory, which has met with favor from many, is that manna was simply the sugary exudation from the twigs of the tamarisk tree, which from the earliest years has been called "man" or "mana" by the Arabs. It is used by them as a relish and is not abundant. Another idea has been advanced — that of its having been derived from the manna rains known in various countries. There is an edible lichen which sometimes falls in showers several inches deep, the wind having blown it from the spots where it grew, and carried it onwards. . . . That a double portion fell on the sixth day, and none on the seventh, points to direct providential arrangement, and it certainly looks as if the true manna which has always been well known, could not have been so great a wonder to the Hebrews, as to have required a sample to be preserved to future generations. *Geikie.*

15. *This is the bread which the Lord hath given you.* God will regard nature as an elastic band to stretch rather than a chain to break. If He will multiply food, in the New Testament, that is no reason why His disciples should fare more delicately than Providence intended for them; they shall still eat barley loaves and fishes, and so the winds help to overthrow Pharaoh and to bring the quails; and when a new thing is to be created, it approaches in its general idea to one of the few natural products of that inhospitable region.

Now let it be supposed for a moment that the supply of manna had never ceased, so that until this day men could every morning gather a day's ration off the ground. Such continuance of the provision would not make it any the less a gift; but only a more lavish boon. And yet it would clearly cease to be regarded as miraculous. In truth, no marvel could excel that which annually multiplies the corn beneath the clod, and by the process of decay in springtime feeds the world in autumn. *G. A. Chadwick.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

3. *We sat by the flesh pots and did eat bread to the full.* The flesh pot was a three-legged vessel of bronze, which the Egyptians used for culinary purposes. They were fond of animal food. *Bread* here is a generic term denoting vegetable diet. This the Egyptians had in large variety. (See Num. 11.5.) *Freeman, Bible Handbook.*

"If you suppose," says Doctor Trumbull in *Studies in Oriental Social Life,* "that a Bedouin requires the food of an ordinary American or English able-

bodied man, you may well wonder how he gets on in the desert. But when you understand how little it takes to keep a Bedwy alive, you will have no wonder that he can live, on the desert or anywhere, in time of plenty or of famine. And if you think that the standard of home living is the ordinary standard of pioneer life or campaigning, you will lose sight of the vast difference, shown in the Bible story, between the Israelites by the flesh pots of Egypt, and the Israelites murmuring over their privations in the wilderness."

Then Doctor Trumbull narrates how his Bedouin attendants lived in crossing the desert. They walked all day long without a particle of food. When they rested for the night, they ate their one meal of the day, which consisted

Flesh Pots of Egypt

either of flat-cakes—"sheets of book binders' paste," he calls them—made from a double handful of flour mixed with water and salt and baked in an improvised oven, or of a double handful of Egyptian corn roasted over a fire.

13. *Quails came up.* These swarms are familiar in many parts of the East. In Palestine, and on the Euphrates, they are very common after the spring rains, and immense numbers of birds are caught for food. . . . Vast flocks are known to visit the Sinai deserts, even now, at the time of migration. Tristam tells us that in Algeria, also, he has found many acres of ground covered with them at daybreak, where the preceding afternoon there had not been one. They were so fatigued, he adds, that they scarcely moved until almost trodden upon. He noticed the same phenomenon in Palestine, on a smaller scale—catching one with his hands in the Jordan Valley, while another was actually crushed by his horse's feet. *Geikie, Hours with the Bible.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Elim, paragraphs 61, 62; Wilderness of Sin, paragraph 63; Sinai, paragraphs 64–66.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. You know that the eye of a fly has a great many facets, so that it sees, not one spider alone, but a multitude of spiders. Whatever it looks at is multiplied many times. Some one has said that we manufacture for our eyes spectacles made after the plan of the fly's eye, so that when we look at our troubles we see them multiplied. We seem to take off those spectacles, too, when we look at our mercies. Last Sunday we left the Israelites praising God for their marvelous escape from the Egyptians. To-day we find them looking at all God had done for them through the wrong end of the telescope; all His blessings have receded into the dim distance, and their present discomforts, especially their lack of abundant food, are magnified many times. "I am glad that I am an Indian," said a youth at Hampton, "because Indians can endure great privations, hardships, and even tortures without complaining." The

Israelites were not like Indians in this respect. What were their words of complaint to Moses and Aaron?

For Older Pupils. Behind the African hills, which rose beyond the Dead Sea, lay the strange land of the exile and bondage of the Israelites — the land of Egypt, with its mighty ruins, its grinding tyranny, its over-grown civilization. This they had left to revisit no more; the Red Sea flowed between them, and before them stretched the level plains of the Arabian desert, the desert where their fathers and their kindred had wandered in former times, where their great leader had fed the flocks of Jethro, through which they must advance till they reached the Land of Promise. *Dean Stanley.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Sin of Murmuring

Good and Bad Travelers. The verses in the Bible which follow Miriam's Song of Triumph record the murmuring of the children of Israel because they could not drink the waters of Marah. The next chapter records their murmurings because of their hunger. Throughout the wilderness life their complaints are reported again and again. Even as they murmured on their way to Palestine more than three thousand years ago, so travelers murmur in Palestine at the present day. The *Youth's Companion* records an exception.

"'She is the best traveler in the party,' said a chaperon of long experience, speaking of a young girl who at the end of a week of discomfort in Palestine was still cheerful and enthusiastic.

"'What makes a good traveler?' asked her friend.

"'Having two eyes of different kinds,' replied the chaperon. 'One eye must be blind to discomforts near at hand and have a clear vision for beauties at a distance. The other eye must be blind to dangers or difficulties in the distance, and see everything of interest and charm in the immediate foreground.'

"Of life and of journeys it may be truly said that blindness to discomforts and delight in beauties make together a safe-conduct into the most inaccessible and fascinating of regions. The Holy Land, for example, abounds in inconveniences for travelers — especially those of the feminine sex. Dirty and ill-kept inns, bad roads, extortionate guides, unsafe water-supply, food as unappetizing as it is mysterious, and last and worst, the pest of insects and vermin conspire to rob the journey of many pleasures. But the good traveler has a magic power to procure the best that is to be had, even from ignorant and reluctant hands, and also a sort of absorption — an elevation — at sight of

Those holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet.

"Such a mood not only ignores inconvenience, but actually does not feel it. Happy the traveler who can command it!"

A Universal Sin. There is one sin which, it seems to me, is everywhere and by everybody underestimated, and quite too much overlooked in valuation of character. It is the sin of fretting. It is common as air, as speech — so common that, unless it rises above its usual monotone, we do not even observe it. Watch any ordinary coming together of people, and see how many minutes it will be before somebody frets — that is, makes more or less complaining state-

ment of something or other, which probably every one in the room or in the car or on the street corner, it may be, knew before, and probably nobody can help. Why say anything about it? It is cold, it is hot, it is wet, it is dry, somebody has broken an appointment, ill cooked a meal; stupidity or bad faith somewhere has resulted in discomfort. There are plenty of things to fret about. It is simply astonishing how much annoyance may be found in the course of every day's living, even of the simplest, if one keeps a sharp eye on that side of things. *Helen Hunt Jackson.*

A Lesson from the Apostle of Sunshine. It was eleven o'clock on as disagreeable a night as Chicago knew last winter that I ordered a cab to take me to the Northwestern station. Carriages were scarce, and I was asked to ride with another man.

"A good night this!"

"Humph," I replied, "if anybody likes this kind, I don't."

"It is just the tonic I need for my eighty-two years. It blows the blues all out of a man if he ever had them, which I never do."

"Do you often ride nights at your time of life?"

"Nearly every night; it does me good."

"Oh, I beg your pardon. This is Doctor Willetts."

"Certainly, and I would have been nursing old age twenty years ago if I had ever found anything bad in life. A night like this! Why to growl about it would take a year off my life."

Thanks to Doctor Willetts I have not seen bad weather since, and I never shall. *E. A. Winship.*

Just be Glad.

O, heart of mine, we shouldn't
Worry so!
What we've missed of calm we couldn't
Have, you know!
What we've met of stormy pain,
And of sorrow's driving rain,
We can better meet again
If it blow.

We have erred in that dark hour
We have known,
When the tears fell with the shower
All alone—
Were not shine and shower blent
As the gracious Master meant?
Let us temper our content
With His own.

For we know, not every morrow
Can be sad
So, forgetting all the sorrow
We have had,
Let us fold away our fears,
And put by our foolish tears,
And through all the coming years
Just be glad. *James Whitcomb Riley.*

II That I may prove Them

Why the Children of Israel needed a Long Proving. It was but a little more than one hundred miles to the land that God had sworn to give to their fathers; and the way was not difficult. It was the way of the caravans, over which almost all the commerce between the land of Goshen, and the southern part of Palestine was carried on. Instead of following this road, Moses went three days into the wilderness; then turned southward; and it was forty years before the tribes took possession of the Promised Land. Why should this have been? They were not fit for settlement in Palestine; they were as little fit for it as they were for fighting their way directly through it. "Thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments or no." They were going into a state of discipline, of schooling, that they might develop the moral, social, and civil qualities necessary for a permanent nationality. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

What Testing means. The word *test* goes back to an old English word meaning a vessel in which precious metals are melted for trial and refinement. The word *try* comes from a word meaning to thrash, to separate grain from straw. The words themselves carry with them, you see, the reason for our testing, our being tried by God. Mr. Howard W. Pope in the *Ram's Horn* gives a bit of philosophy from a blacksmith: — "I often take a piece of iron, and put it into the fire, and bring it to a white heat. Then I put it on the anvil, and strike it once or twice to see if it will take a temper. If I think it will, I plunge it into the water, and suddenly charge the temperature. Then I put it into the fire again, and again I plunge it into the water. This I repeat several times. Then I put it on the anvil, and hammer it, and bend it, and rasp and file it, and it makes some useful article which I put into a carriage, where it will do good service for twenty-five years. If, however, when I first strike it on the anvil, I think it will not take a temper, I throw it into the scrap heap, and sell it at a half-penny a pound. Now, I believe that my Heavenly Father has been testing me to see if I will take a temper. He has put me into the fire and into the water and I have tried to bear it just as patiently as I could, and my daily prayer has been, 'Don't throw me into the scrap heap.'"

III I am the Living Bread

What Christ does for Those who eat the Living Bread. To feed on Christ is to get His strength into us to be our strength. You feed on the corn-field, and the strength of the corn-field comes into you and is your strength. You feed on the corn-field and then go and build your house, and it is the corn-field in your strong arm that builds the house, that cuts down the trees, and piles the stones and lifts the roof into its place. You feed on Christ, and then go and live your life, and it is Christ in you that lives your life, that helps the poor, that fights the battle, and that wins the crown. *Phillips Brooks.*

Who covet the Living Bread? How many of us have no idea what Christ means by being the Bread of Life, simply because we have not first of all asked ourselves what we wish life itself to be! If life be for us, what it is for so many, something out of which is shut not only what is God-like, but even the higher human affections — in which aspirations after unselfishness are re-

garded as misleading — in which we take no more interest in our fellow than our curiosity or our avarice excites — in which we can not know God as our Father, because we fear Him only as the incalculable foe that may disappoint our selfish hopes — in which we can not know our fellow-men as brethren, because we only recognize them as our rivals for the good things and snug places of the world,— then we have no need of Christ, and His offer of Himself as the Bread of our lives will fall meaningless on our ears. But if life for us be otherwise; if we choose to see life in its largest meanings, and lay upon our hearts its real possibilities; if life be to us the power to grow away from sin, to stand through temptation and to wear down adversity; if it be the recovery of failure, and the healing of wounds, and the courage against death; if still high, we have known that we come from the Father, who has made His image our ideal, and our destiny the perfect performance of His will; if we feel how far we are from His image, and how terribly difficult that will is to do,— I say, if life be such a liberty, and such a hope, and such an agony, then Christ alone is the strength of our lives. He will not fail us in any of its wants and struggles; but he that cometh to Him shall never hunger, and he that believeth in Him shall never thirst. *George Adam Smith,* in *The Forgiveness of Sins.*

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this sun?"
"Bravely!" said he, "for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ the Living Bread!"

Matthew Arnold.

SENTENCE SERMONS

When God will guide, God will provide. *Adolphe Monod.*

The spectacles of regret always magnify. *Henry van Dyke.*

I dare no more fret than I dare curse and swear. *John Wesley.*

Let thy discontents be thy secrets. *Benjamin Franklin.*

But how carve way i' the life that lies before,
If bent on groaning ever for the past? *Browning.*

We must live as the Saviour did; His sorrows He divided with His Father, His life with the world. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Life is probation, and the earth no goal,
But starting point of man. *Browning.*

Men are not put into the world to bask among ideal conditions: one of the facts of life that makes life worth living is the struggle to make ideals come true. *Sunday School Times.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Deut. 8.3.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. 1 Tim. 6.6.

To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna. Rev. 2.17.

Give us this day our daily bread. Matt. 6.11.

When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. Job. 23.10.

Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. Phil. 3.13.

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. John 6.57.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We get our food in times of retirement and the solitary communion of prayer. We live and grow by the bread that cometh down from Heaven. Here we find those bright revelations of truth, here we are let into that blood acquaintanceship with God in which He becomes the unfailing supply of our hunger, and an ever-living spring that forbids our thirst. But the supply is like that of the manna, it can not be laid up. Even that knowledge that seems to be so clear and positive and full, and which we think can never depart, vanishes we know not how, unless the supply is reunited by a new and living access to God. *Horace Bushnell.*

THE LESSON STORY

"Then believed they his words; they sang his praise. They soon forgot his works; they wanted not for his counsel," says the Psalmist. Moses led the Israelites from the Red Sea a three days' march into the wilderness without finding water, and when they could not drink the water at Marah because of its bitterness they murmured against Moses. He cast a tree into the waters which made them sweet. Going on to Elim they found an abundance of water. From there they journeyed to the wilderness of Sin and here again they all murmured against Moses and Aaron. "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full, for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger," they say. Can you not hear these childish people complaining in just such extravagant words as you may hear from grown-up children now?

From God Moses received a promise of miraculous food which would test the loyal faith and obedience of the people. Each day they were to gather their daily portion, but on the sixth day a double portion, as no food would fall on the Sabbath. Moses reported to the people that God had heard their murmurings. Aaron and he were but God's servants, and they had murmured not against them, but against God. In the evening they would have flesh to eat, and in the morning bread. Moses then bade Aaron summon the people from their tents to "come near before the Lord!" As they beheld the mysterious pillar of cloud, Moses told them, at God's command, that the gift of food would be to them a proof that He was the Lord their God. When evening came the camp was covered with quails, as had been promised, and when morning dawned and the dew disappeared there lay on the ground a small round thing which was strange to the Israelites. "What is it?" they asked. "It is the bread which the Lord hath given you," answered Moses. Daily they were to feel their dependence on

God, and, therefore, daily must they gather it. When they tried to keep it over, it bred worms, yet the double supply on the sixth day remained good for the seventh. "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; until they came into the borders of the land of Canaan.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The almost continuous murmuring of the children of Israel throughout their forty years wandering. (Ex. 14.10–12; 15.23, 24; 16.1–3; 17.1–3; 32.1–2.) (Num. 11.1–6; 14.1–4; 21.4, 5.)

2. The treatment of the children of Israel in this lesson and in its counterpart in the eleventh chapter of Numbers. "The murmurings of the people in the beginning of their journey through the wilderness is treated with the greatest mildness, almost as a child's sickness; but their murmuring towards the end of the journey is regarded as a severe offense, and is severely punished; it is like the offense of a mature man, committed in view of many years experience of God's miraculous help." *Lange.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read chapter XIX for the awe-inspiring preparation for the announcement of the Decalogue. 2. What is the Decalogue called in Ex. 34.28; Deut. 4.13? What does the word *Decalogue* mean? What is it called in Ex. 31.18; 32.15; 34.29? 3. What reference can you find to the two commandments, love to God and love to one's neighbor? (Deut. 6.5; Lev. 19.34; Matt. 22.37, 39; Mark 12.30, 31; Luke 10.27.) 4. Look up these references to the way in which the Decalogue was "spoken": Deut. 5.4, 22, 23; 33.2; Psa. 68.17; Acts 7.38; Gal. 3.19. 5. What is the difference between the first and the second commandment? 6. How were the Israelites accustomed to sanctify the Sabbath? (Num. 28.9, 10; Lev. 24.5–9; 2 Kings 4.23.) 7. What special work did they refrain from on the Sabbath? (Ex. 16.27–29; 34.21; 35.3; Num. 15.32–36; Amos 8.5; Jer. 17.21; Neh. 13.15–22.) 8. How was Sabbath desecration punished? (Num. 15.35; 2 Chron. 36.21.) 9. How do we know that the stone tablets of the commandments were in Solomon's Temple? (1 Kings 8.6–9; 2 Chron. 5.7–10.) 10. What question did a Pharisee ask Jesus in regard to the commandments, and what was His answer? (Matt. 22.36–40.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

At Rephidim the people murmured for water and the water came from a rock which Moses struck with his rod. Then came Amalek and fought with Israel; as long as Moses held aloft his hand with the rod of God in it, the Israelites prevailed in battle. Aaron and Hur stayed his hands, and Joshua conquered the Amalekites. It is now recorded that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought Moses' wife and sons to him in the wilderness, although the event probably occurred later. When Jethro saw how Moses decided questions among the Israelites from morning till night, he advised him to spare his strength, and appoint others to hear the smaller matters. This advice Moses followed, and after that only the "hard causes" were brought to him.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—DUTIES TOWARD GOD

Exodus 20.1–11. (Read Ex. 19.1–20.11.) Commit vv. 1–11.

Golden Text

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Deut. 6.5.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 20.1–11

1 And God spake all these words, saying,
2 I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:
5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me;
6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:
10 But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the Lord thy God: *in* it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates:
11 For *in* six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *God spake.* See Deut. 5.22. Many Jewish and Christian expositors affirm that the Sinaitic proclamation of the Decalogue was literally by the voice of God; that is, that words were formed in the air by the power of God, and not by the intermediation and ministering of angels. *Keil.* The vocables of God, no; but the word of God, yes; the law of God, yes. *Farrar. All these words.* The Ten Commandments. Our word *Decalogue* is from two Greek words *deka* (ten) and *logos* (word).

3. *Before me.* Literally, before my face, "side by side with me," *i. e.* in addition to me. *Rawlinson.*

4. The first commandment forbids us to worship false gods; the second forbids us to worship the true God under false forms. *Farrar. In heaven, in the earth, in the water;* the whole universe. *Under the earth.* This is appended to the water to express in a pictorial manner the idea of its being lower than the solid ground. (Compare Deut. 4.18.) *Delitzsch.*

5. *A jealous God.* Jealous of His own honor, of the use of images which turn the worshiper's mind away from Him even when they represent Him.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers . . . keep my commandments. The laws of heredity.

6. *Mercy.* R. V., *lovingkindness. Unto thousands of them.* R. V. M., *a thousand generations. Of them* has the force of *belonging to.* The consequences of sin are declared to affect only a few generations of the sinner's own descendants; the benefits of a righteous life embrace thousands, descendants or others, who come within reach of its influence. *Driver.*

7. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* To take a word in vain is to make a vain or false use of it; to employ it in a manner damaging to truth and piety. *Terry.*

8. *Remember.* Be ever mindful to observe the day. *Terry.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *God spake.* Believe, or not, in this Sinaitic splendor, and these thunder-shaken crags; but whether the desert trembled and Sinai blazed or not, the great law of God as expressed in those Ten Commandments have to thee and me a sanction infinitely more transcendent, an origin indispensably more divine. That sanction is not derived from the mere historic record of the belief that more than thirty centuries ago a nation of slaves and fugitives heard in the air a great Voice which has been heard no more. We do believe that by some mighty revelation, which came to them as intensely as from the infolding flame, those commandments were stamped at Sinai upon the heart of Israel; but if we thus believe that "God spake those words and said," it is mainly because we also believe that here and now, to every heart, whether innocent or guilty, to every conscience, whether slumbering or awakened, to every intellect, whether humble or defiant, God speaks these words and says. *F. W. Farrar.*

3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* Before Moses came, what a confusion of ideas,—ideas polytheistic, ideas vicious, and foolish! Men associated the river, the tree, the cloud, the storm, the beasts, with their ideas of deity. There is a legend that tells us how Moses came to feel his way through this mass of error into truth concerning the one God and moral Governor. The young Hebrew and his Egyptian foster-mother were journeying with a caravan to Damascus. One evening sitting in the tents an old priest pointed out Venus as the presiding God. While others slept Moses rose to pray to that far-off deity, but when the youth had opened his eyes, lo! the star had set, and he was conscious of the great disappointment and loss of faith. Another time a teacher pointed out the sun as the center of divine power, but while Moses prostrated himself before the sun, a cloud wrapt the fire-god in darkness and obscurity, and then his heart went out to One who was above the stars and beyond the sun. And, oh! What a thought was that that entered his conscience — the sense of God, the one Mind that pervaded all scenes; one Purpose that controlled all events; one Heart full of mercy and love, pity and compassion, and he cried out; "Before the mountains were brought forth, or thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God!" *Newell Dwight Hillis,* in *Moses, the Typical Hero and Leader.*

4. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.* The second commandment is by no means a repetition of the first. The first forbids us to have any other gods besides the One who makes Himself known by the name, "I am Jehovah Elohim, the Lord thy God." The second, taking it for granted that

there is no god but the One true God, forbids the creation of anything which is supposed to be a representation of Him, to assist man in His worship. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

5. *Visiting the iniquities.* I do not find that we regard the truthfulness, the justice, and the generosity of a man with diminished admiration or honor, if we discover that his father and his grandfather and his great-grandfather before him were truthful, just, and generous; nor do I find that if a man is hard, selfish, grasping, tyrannical, merciless, our moral condemnation of him is diminished by the discovery that these vices disgraced the long line of his ancestors.

The man who inherits from drunken parents an almost unconquerable physical craving for drink may be pitied, as we pity a man who inherits a weak heart or weak lungs. But reckless and unscrupulous ambition, intense selfishness, lying and other sins of the spirit — for these we regard a man with no pity, even though it be notorious that his fathers through twenty generations have been guilty of the same vices. Whatever his ancestors may have been, we condemn him for his own crimes.

Your sins, your moral weaknesses, your evil temper, were your parents' as well as yours. But does your conscience for this reason condemn you for them less sternly? Do you for this reason feel less humiliation, less shame, less self-reproach, when you entreat God to be merciful to you and to grant you forgiveness? *R. W. Dale,* in *The Expositor.*

7. *Take the name in vain.* With that foolish literalism which eats out the heart of true religion, the Jews took the "name" of God to mean the vocable by which He was called; and because they thought that the four Hebrew letters which spell the name Jehovah were more sacred than the other name of God, they pronounced the former word with the vowels of the latter, as though the thing to be revered were the mere breath of articulated air; and thus slavishly keeping the commandment in the letter, they broke it constantly in the spirit. (See Matt. 5.34–36.) *F. W. Farrar,* in *The Voice from Sinai.*

10. *Thou shalt not do any work.* The setting apart of one day in seven for rest and worship was due, primarily, to the fact that the human machine will run six days with ease and regularity, if it can rest on the seventh day, but that it will creak and break if it is pushed on through every day alike. The duty of rest is quite as imperative as the necessity of work. The individual or the nation that disregards this law pays the penalty. *Amory H. Bradford.*

I have found this rule very helpful. If a man or a horse is obliged to do necessary work on the Sabbath, give him Saturday or Monday for a rest-day. Saturday is my day of rest, and I look forward to it as a holiday. So much for necessary work; when it comes to unnecessary work, every man has to settle that with his own conscience. *D. L. Moody.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

1. *And God spake all these words.* One of the doctrines of the Jews is said to be that the souls of all Jews, including those then unborn, were assembled at Sinai to hear the law proclaimed. In the East, at the present day, a Jew who has been wrongfully accused exclaims, "My soul, too, has been on Sinai."

4. The Mohammedans hold that the second commandment forbids the art of sculpture and painting; their mosques are ornamented only with texts from the Koran and with arabesque designs. In the early Christian centuries no repre-

sentations of Christ were made; in 402 A. D. a bishop tore down a curtain which had an image of Christ woven on it, and told the priest to use it for a pauper's shroud.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Sinai, paragraph 67; Sinai Peninsula, paragraphs 50–52.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. We have followed the people of Israel from their brick making and cruel bondage in Egypt across the Red Sea, whose waters parted to let them cross and then flowed back and overwhelmed their pursuers, and on through the wilderness, where miracles were wrought to satisfy their thirst and their hunger, till in the third month of their pilgrimage we find them encamped before Mount Sinai. The mysterious pillar of cloud and fire which guided them is now resting on Sinai's summit. They are in a lonely spot surrounded by lofty mountain peaks, and while the mountains tremble and lightnings flash around the summits, Moses, their leader, ascends to the awful solitude of the mountain top, there to receive the two stone tablets on which are written the Ten Commandments of God.

For Older Pupils. "How immense appear to us the sins that we have not committed!" exclaimed Madame Neckar. We may think that we are not atheists nor polytheists, nor idolaters, nor profane swearers, nor Sabbath breakers, in fact, that all the commandments we have kept from our youth up and they are all in regard to black sins of which we personally are not guilty. The more fully we understand the commandments, however, and their far-reaching meanings, the more we will feel the need of repeating, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep thy law." "Although I am an old Doctor of the Scriptures," said Luther, "yet I have not myself come from the primary grade, and do not rightly understand the Ten Commandments of God and the Lord's Prayer."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Duties are Privileges

God's Commands. The Ten Commandments treat of our duties to God and our duties to others. They are given in the form of commands, for, as Doctor Robertson has said, "God can not give advice; He can only issue a command." God can not say, "It is better to do this;" His perfections demand something absolute: "Thou shalt do this; thou shalt not do this." We know that it is our duty to obey God's commands; we need also to realize that it is our privilege. "I know it is my duty because I hate it so," is a remark we often hear. Is this a test of a duty? Is duty an unpleasant word? What is a privilege? What are some of your duties? What are some of your privileges? Are some of your duties privileges? May all duties be considered privileges?

"There is something finer than to do right against inclination, and that is to have an inclination to do right," says Doctor van Dyke. "There is something nobler than reluctant obedience, and that is joyful obedience. The rank of virtue

is not measured by its disagreeableness, but by its sweetness and the heart that loves it."

"We shall one day forget all about duty and do everything from the love of the loveliness of it, the satisfaction of the righteousness of it," says Doctor Macdonald. "While God's will is our law, we are but a kind of noble slaves; when His will is our will, we are free children."

A Common Mistake. A young woman came to me in distress over her failure to fulfil the religious duties of life. I was aware that at this very time she was living a life of sacrificial devotion to a blind father. I asked if this service of hers was not a religious duty. She answered, "Oh no! it can not be so, because that brings me such joy; it is the delight of my heart to serve my father!" I scarcely knew whether I was amused or not. To any parent of earth the child's service is precious in proportion as it is painless. Man is accused of making God in his own image; has he not done so here! Why has he not transferred to the service of the Divine Father that sense of privilege, that feeling of exultant joy, which he typically associates with the service of an earthly parent! *George Matheson.*

The Dear Must. This expression of Goethe's, the "dear must," sounds very odd, for few people are in the habit of thinking of their duties, their musts, as dear or delightful, but what a world of difference it makes with our duties when we can look at them in this light! A school report which a father received in regard to his son stated that the boy was "always obedient to the rules of the school, but never cheerfully so." That boy had not yet perceived a glimmer of the dear must in his life, and probably never will. A young collegian learned this in his first vacation work. He secured a position in a packing department of a wholesale house. By the afternoon of the second day his strength seemed exhausted, he was sure he could never handle another heavy package. Then the thought occurred to him, what if he were playing foot-ball, would he be so tired? He made a vigorous "tackle," and with the heavy package in his arms instead of the ball, his "touchdown" soon followed. He continued his work with all the zest of foot-ball playing and the remainder of the vacation was "only fun," he declared.

"Men who do their work without enjoying it, are like men carving statues with hatchets," said Bishop Brooks. "The statue gets carved perhaps and is a monument forever of the dogged perseverance of the artist, but there is a perpetual waste of toil, and there is no fine result in the end."

I delight to do Thy Will. I delight, literally interpreted, means, "I am bent" to do Thy will. The inclinations of life are instinctively set in the way of obedience. The sense of constraint and reluctance is absent. The bent of the life is God-ward, the bent abides. This represents a fine and mature attainment. What at first was constrained has come at length to be natural. He who says, "I will incline my heart to Thy testimonies," and will resolutely incline it every moment, day by day, will at length be able to sing, "O God! my heart is fixed." When the spiritual becomes natural, we have entered into the joy of the Lord. When our obedience has become instinctive, "His statutes have become our song." "We delight to do His will." *J. H. Jowett.*

Let May take the Place of Must. Blessed is the day when privilege deposes duty and assumes the crown. It is a great and glorious revolution when "may" takes the place of "must" in our lives. An old Puritan minister of the seventeenth century — Doctor Stoughton — said, "We are all like chil-

dren's tops, that will go but little longer than they are whipped." The good Doctor was right if he meant that we have all known that day and experience; but he is wrong if he meant that there is no other experience for us to know. The day comes to many a man when the burden he carries becomes the joy he desires. The pictures in our church windows have great truth in them when they place the crown on the cross. So it was that Samuel Rutherford said that the cross of Christ was such a burden as sails are to a ship, or wings to a bird,—a burden that carries us onward to our desired home. *Sunday School Times.*

II THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THINE HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT

Why we should love God. I know, O Lord, that Thou hast commanded me, and, therefore, it is my duty to love Thee with all my heart and with all my strength. I know Thou art infinitely holy and overflowing in all perfection; and, therefore, it is my duty so to love Thee. I know Thou hast created me, and that I have neither being nor blessing but what is the effect of Thy power and goodness. I know that in love to me, being lost to sin, Thou didst send Thy only Son, and that He, being the Lord of glory, did humble Himself to the death upon the cross, that I might be raised to glory. I know Thou hast provided me with all necessary helps for carrying me through this life to that eternal glory, and this out of the excess of Thy pure mercy to me, unworthy of all mercies. I know Thou hast promised to be Thyself my "exceeding great reward"; though it is Thou alone who Thyself "workest in me, both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure."

Upon these and many other titles I confess it is my duty to love Thee, my God, with all my heart. Give Thy strength unto Thy servant, that Thy love may fill my heart and be the motive of all the use I make of my understanding, my affections, my senses, my health, my time, and whatever other talents I have received from Thee. *John Wesley.*

How we may learn to love. It is true that love can not be forced, that it can not be made to order, that we can not love because we ought or even because we want. But we can bring ourselves into the presence of the lovable. We can enter into friendship through the door of discipleship. We can learn love through service. *Hugh Black.*

"He that keepeth my commandments, he it is that loveth me." Obey Him, and you must love Him. Abide in Him, and you must obey Him. Cultivate His friendship. Live after Christ, in His spirit, as in His presence, and it is difficult to think what more you can do. *Henry Drummond.*

Love to God the One Thing Needful. For early Christianity, Augustine laid down the moral rule "Love God, and do as you please." (*Dilige, et quod vis fac.*) Nothing else is needed. The inclinations will be so transformed by love of God that they will always point to righteousness. The Ten Commandments are, no doubt, a convenience for persons incapable of perceiving the unity or virtue. The precepts which society has elaborated and embodied in its forms and usages may well repay study. But all rest on an elementary principle. If we love God, morality is ours. *George Herbert Palmer,* in *The Field of Ethics.*

The Nature of Spiritual Love. Love awakened through the reason and in the spirit is spiritual love. The qualities admired belong to the spirit, the eye that sees is the spirit's, and the admiration excited lives in the spirit. The

physical eye can see the beauty of the flower, but the spiritual eye alone can see the loveliness, which is also the lovableness, of a fine character. The knowledge, mediate or immediate, of heroic and noble qualities, awakens love to the person to whom they belong, and whether centuries or seas lie between us and that person, our love is none the less real. . . . The eye that sees Jesus is the mind's, and the heart that loves Him the mind's, too. The sight is spiritual and the affection the same. Our love for Christ, while wanting the warmth of our love for man, has more depth and root in our being; while its form is less fervent, its essence is more real. The one seems to be, but the other in reality is, the greater. Indeed, it can not be compared to our love for the living. It resembles much more closely our love for the dead. Death at once sanctifies and spiritualizes our affection. Our love for the dead is serene and strong as death itself. The dead never die to us, they live in our hearts purified, beautified, exalted into minor deities whom we can reverence without idolatry. And of this kind is our love of Christ; we love the Saviour as we love the dead, not as we love the living. *A. M. Fairbairn,* in *The City of God.*

What Christ taught. Moses said, "Do this or do that." Jesus refrained from regulations — He proposed that we should love. . . . Progress in the moral world is from complexity to simplicity. First one hundred duties; afterwards they are gathered into Ten Commandments, then they are reduced to two, love of God and love of man; and, finally, Jesus says His last word: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you."

Jesus laid on His disciples the repeated charge of love to one another; He did not once command them to love God. This was not an accident: it was an intention — the revelation of Jesus' idea of love. Our Master accepted the solidarity of Love — that no one could love a fellow creature with a pure, unselfish passion without loving God. "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10.40.) As St. John has it, with an echo of past words, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God." *John Watson.*

III Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in Vain

Swearing is not a Trifling Sin. The third commandment is distinguished from all the others by having a threat connected with it. The Judge by whose laws and sentences our eternal state is to be fixed, from whose sentence there can be no appeal, says He will not hold guiltless — a strong way of declaring He will pronounce guilty — the one who takes His name in vain. The swearer is apt to think his offense a slight one. God says He regards it a grievous one. The swearer thinks God will not punish the use of a few trifling words. This is only another instance of the sinner underestimating the enormity of his sin.

What is the reason that you swear? Answer this question faithfully, and you may see some little of the greatness of your sin, may confess that God is right in His estimate of it. You gain nothing by it, but lose much. Swearing is not regarded by men as a mark of intellect, or learning, or truthfulness, or refinement, or honor, but very generally the reverse. You know well that swearing demoralizes the community. It directly opposes religion, which is honoring God, for it dishonors Him. It directly opposes respect for law, faithfulness in office, the administration of justice, undermining respect for God and the sanctity of an oath. A gentleman is always considerate of the feelings of others. But

you despise the feelings of those who honor God when you use His name in vain. Is the cause of this wicked act any other than this, "The wickedness of my heart is so great that it flows over my lips?" God, The Holy One, you hold in contempt, and out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh. *Frederick S. Schenck,* in *The Ten Commandments.*

Profanity easily becomes a Habit. "Profane" means before or outside the fane or temple: from *pro,* before, and *fanum,* a temple. Inside the walls around the temple lay the sacred undefiled garden, the loveliest spot in all the land. But the unwalled ground outside was common, and trampled bare by the feet of man and beast.

The Red Indians have not one single oath in their mother tongues. They do swear now, but they swear in English and French. Their wonderful reverence for the Great Spirit kept their language undefiled by profane words.

Shun all oaths great and small, for they gain a terrible hold over people. If you practise faulty grammar and pronunciation in your youth, you will find it hard to correct your mistakes. They will cling to you, mock all your efforts, and become a piece of yourselves. Habits of speech are wonderfully sullen and stubborn. The man can scarcely wholly unlearn the oaths he learnt as a boy.

I earnestly advise you to shun all little minced oaths, such as "by Jove," "by George," "good-gracious." Love pure, sweet, simple Saxon, and avoid everything that even seems to unhallow or dishallow God's name or make it common. *James Wells.*

No Swearers wanted. "I have never yet seen a good-mannered horse," said an owner of fine horses, "that was sworn at all the time. It hurts the feelings of a sensitive horse, and I'll keep my word to discharge any man if I catch him swearing within the hearing of any horse in this stable."

A judge in Atlanta, Georgia, has ordered the policemen there to provide themselves with gags and use them whenever a man or woman swears on being arrested. The Claridge, one of the finest hotels in London, recently refused to receive one of our western millionaires because of his profanity when there once before as a guest.

"Profanity is not an evidence of manhood," says the President of Leland Stanford University, "it is a sign of a dull, coarse, unrefined nature. The harm of profanity is not that it hurts God's feelings. It is the man whom it hurts. It shall not profit a foot-ball captain, if he can not utter a command without an oath. 'What cometh out of a man defileth him,' and the man thus defiled extends his corrosion to others."

In the *Tempest,* Shakespeare represents the savage, half-witted slave Caliban as saying to Prospero: —

> "You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse: the red-plague rid you
> For learning me your language."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Jesus lived from beginning to end without deviation or exception by the words proceeding from the mouth of God. *Morgan.*

The people that have a bad notion of God have also a bad state, bad government, bad laws. *Hegel.*

Man's thought of God, of the cause and end alike of his own being and of the

universe is his most commanding thought; make it, and you make the man. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

He who never works is unfitted for worship: he who never pauses to worship is rendered incapable of work. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Loving God is but letting God love us. *Bushnell.*

Every moral law is written in our own being more clearly than the commands of Moses were graven in stone. *Amory H. Bradford.*

Meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so. *Mrs. Browning.*

No Sabbath, no worship; no worship, no religion; no religion, no morals; no morals, then — pandemonium. *Crawford Johnson.*

There are a great many things which God will put up with in a human heart; there is one thing He will not put up with — a second place. *Ruskin.*

Whenever thou shalt find thyself to have let slip an oath, punish thyself for it by missing the next meal. *Chrysostom.*

In law Moses rises above Justinian, and Blackstone, and Story, as some Matterhorn rises above the low-browed hills. *Hillis.*

The prayer that is denied by the life, the praise offered to God, which is counteracted by rebellion against Him when the hour of that praise has passed away, that is blasphemy, that is the taking the name of God in vain. *G. C. Morgan.*

Back of God's smile upon obedience, and His frown upon disobedience, back of the laws kept that build us up, and the laws broken that pull us down, is God's love seeking to win ours. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13.10.

Sin is the transgression of the law. 1 John 3.4.

O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Psa. 119.97.

Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. Gal. 3.24.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Matt. 22.37.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Matt. 6.9.

God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4.24.

Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of Man. Eccl. 12.13.

Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy. Psa. 99.3.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 1 John 2.3.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

The commandments ask you: Is God in all your thoughts? Have you in the dark places of your own heart no secret idol which is more to you than God? Do you never take His name in vain by offering to Him a careless and irreverent worship? Are your Sundays such a consecration of that day as to become a consecration of every day? *F. W. Farrar.*

THE LESSON STORY

In the third month after crossing the Red Sea the children of Israel reached the wilderness of Sinai and encamped before the Mount. There were awe-inspiring portents on the summit, thunders and lightnings and fire and smoke. The people remained at a safe distance from the mountain as commanded, and Moses went back and forth as mediator between God and them. A preliminary covenant was ratified; the people would be to God a holy nation and they would do "All the Lord hath spoken." Then the Ten Commandments were given to Moses, the first four dealing with man's duty to God, the last six with his duty to others. "The first commandment means," as Doctor Farrar has pointed out, "worship God exclusively; the second, worship God spiritually; the third, reverence God in your words; the fourth, reverence God on His day."

Almighty God! direct us
To keep Thy perfect Law!
O blessèd Saviour, help us
Nearer to Thee to draw;
Let Sinai's thunders aid us
To guard our feet from sin,
And Calvary's light inspire us
The love of God to win. *John Hay.*

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Moses' part in the Decalogue. We can not suppose that Moses was a mere mechanical instrument in conveying their laws to Israel from Jehovah, or in embodying great principles of religion and civil order in practical institutions. God uses instruments that are fit. The concurrence of the human mind with Him, in all that He does by its means, is a thing which He always requires, and which may in every case be assumed by us. *A. B. Davidson.*

2. No one is an atheist by nature. God made man to seek Him. The search after God is a thing of nature. In other words, religion is so natural to man that it is simplest truth to say, he is by nature religious. It is not a discovery or invention due to art or artifice, but a holy necessity of nature made by its Maker. No one ever discovered sight or invented hearing. Man saw because he had eyes, heard because he had ears; the sense created the sensations. Speech was no invention or discovery; it grew, and man was hardly conscious of its growth; and religion is as natural as sight, or hearing, or speech — as natural because as native and as essential to his nature. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Repeat the Ten Commandments. 2. How does Lev. 19.18 summarize the last six commandments? 3. By what parable did Christ teach the Golden Text of the lesson? (Luke 10.25–37.) 4. What distinction is made in Lev. 19.4, 5, and Num. 35.9–25 between killing and murdering? 5. What were Christ's comments in the Sermon on the Mount on the sixth commandment? (Matt. 5.21–26.) On the ninth? (Matt. 5.33–37.) 6. What may one rightfully covet? (1 Cor. 12.31.) 7. What is the meaning of the word *covet* in the ninth commandment? 8. Which commandment is the hardest to keep?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—DUTIES TOWARD MEN

Exodus 20.12–17. (Read Exodus 20, 24.) Commit vv. 12–17

Golden Text

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Lev. 19.18.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 20.12–17.

12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
13 Thou shalt not kill.
14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
15 Thou shalt not steal.
16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

Mount Sinai

12. *Honour.* Love and reverence. *That thy days may be long.* The first commandment with promise, Eph. 6.2. National life is dependent on respect for authority.

13. *Thou shalt not kill.* R. V. (English) *Thou shalt do no murder.* See Ex. 21.12–14 and Matt. 5.21–26.

15. *Thou shalt not steal.* See the laws in regard to theft in Ex. 22.1–15.

16. *False witness.* See Ex. 23.1, 2; Lev. 19.6; Deut. 19.16–20; and Matt. 5.33–37.

17. *Thou shalt not covet.* "Thou shalt not excessively or wrongfully, unlawfully, desire anything which thou canst not innocently and uprightly possess."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

12. *That thy days may be long.* The promise coupled with this command, in common with almost all the promises made to the ancient people of God, applies rather to the nation than to the individual. That people among whom the sacredness of the family ideal is maintained, whose children render obedience to their parents during the time of immaturity, and always honor them, will be the nation of strength, retaining its hold upon its own possessions, and abiding long in the land. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

13. *Thou shalt not kill.* Such things do, of course, happen, but far away from the regions in which our life runs its placid, crimeless course. But the words of Christ recall us. What of the seed from which such deadly plants grow? Are we so perfectly in love and charity with all men as to be guiltless? *Edward Purchase.*

16. *False witness against thy neighbour.* In the days of nomadism two men had a dispute about the ownership of stock. The elders of the clan or tribe sat in front of the tent of the most distinguished or venerable man among them, about the going down of the sun, to hear, try and determine the matter in dispute. It is plain to be seen that there can be no possibility of making headway in the case if the persons who testify do not tell the truth. There is an end to the possibility of justice, and then of civilization, if the judges can not get to the facts of the case. The guide to the facts must largely be in the testimony of the parties. Now a command that a man should not bear false witness against his neighbor, coming to the people with all the force and solemnity of a divine institution, was putting them all under oath beforehand to tell the truth in any case that might arise. *Charles Caverno.*

He that breaks this commandment is at once a thief, a coward, and a liar — a liar, because false witness is the opposite of truth; a coward because a lie once started on its way, is never finally overtaken, and he who thus aims at the heart of his fellow man gives him no chance of correction; a thief, for as Shakespeare says:

> Who steals my purse steals trash;
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him
> And makes me poor indeed. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

17. *Thou shalt not covet.* How covetousness throws us off the track on every course of life! It is the meanest and most destructive of vices. It is laziness, cowardice, and envy all together, to want what some one else possesses. If it is worth having, go and win the like of it. Covetousness is to aspiration what a serpent coiled at the edge of a path is to an eagle on its wing. *C. F. Goss.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

12. *Honour thy father and thy mother.* The term "father" has a much wider scope in the East than as ordinarily employed in the languages of the West.

In the East the term "father" applies not merely to the parent of his children, but to the head of a household, to the senior of any allied party or group, to the chief of a tribe, to the sovereign of a nation, and the ancestral founder of a people, and so on all the way up to the eternal Father — God. Read in the light of the land where it was first proclaimed, the Fifth Commandment is a call to revere all who are above us as the representatives of God; the parents in the household; the venerable ones in the community; the rulers in the state; the elders and overseers in the church; all those who have authority over us and under God.

And the basal idea of the promise accompanying this commandment is, that thus, and thus alone, are secured stability and permanency to the life of the individual, of the family, of the tribe, of the nation. Reverent subordination to God-given authority is the surest guard of length of days in the possession of any home or land which the Lord gives for an inheritance.

It is a remarkable fact that China, whose government has been longer established than any other now existing, is founded on the basis of this commandment. "Filial piety," says Professor Douglas, "is the leading principle in Chinese ethics. It is the point upon which every teacher from Confucius downwards, has most strongly insisted, and its almost universal practice affords grounds for the belief held by some that in the long continuance of the empire the Chinese are reaping the reward held out in the fifth commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue." But the trouble with China is that it recognizes only one commandment in the Decalogue, and misses the gain of keeping other commandments. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

There is no limit to the thoroughness and cruelty with which penalty is inflicted in China upon a child that kills his father. In Foochow I saw traces of this penalty upon a young man who had killed his father with a hoe as they worked together in the field. The officers chained him to a post in the execution place, and hacked him to pieces. Then they executed the mother for having such a son, and the neighbors living next on either side, for having such a neighborhood. Next the officer, like a policeman, whose duty it was to keep order in that beat, was banished. The *taotai,* or governor, of the district was removed from office. Then they burned the house in which the man lived, and dug up the ground to the depth of two feet on which the building stood, and carted the dirt off and dumped it into the river. They intended to wipe out that wickedness so it could not spread. *Bishop Foster.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Sinai, paragraph 67; Sinai Peninsula, paragraphs 53–55.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. "You need not break the glasses of a telescope, or coat them over with paint in order to prevent you from seeing through them," says Henry Ward Beecher. "Just breathe upon them, and the dew of your breath will shut out all the stars. So it does not require great crimes to hide the light of God's countenance. Little faults can do it just as well. Take a shield and cast a spear upon it, and it will leave in it one great dent. Prick it all over with a million little needle shafts, and they will take the polish from

it far more than the piercing of the spear. So it is not so much the great sins which take the freshness from our consciences, as the numberless petty faults which we are all the time committing." With these words in mind, let us look at the commandments which refer to ourselves in relation to our neighbors, and see what lessons they have for us who neither steal nor murder.

For Older Pupils. "This is my commandment," said Jesus, "that ye love one another as I have loved you;" "Every particle of matter in the universe," said Newton, "attracts every other particle with a force directly proportioned to the mass of the attracting particle, and inversely to the square of the distance," are the two monumental deliverances in human knowledge, and the Law of Love in the sphere of metaphysics is the analogue of the law of gravitation in the sphere of physics. Before Newton, gravitation was holding the world together; it was his honor to formulate the law. Before Jesus, Love was preventing the dissolution of the Race; it was His glory to dictate the law. Newton found a number of fragments and left a physical universe. Jesus found a multitude of individuals and created a spiritual Kingdom. *Watson.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Honor thy Father and thy Mother

As Others see us. When Li Hung Chang returned to Peking after his visit to our country, he wrote to a little girl in Brooklyn: "If your parents are still living, I hope you are dutiful to them. I have observed that the Western nations are not so dutiful to parents as we are here in China." Do you think the Chinese statesman was correct in his observation? By "Western nations" he must have meant one farther west than Europe, for Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer said that when she was traveling in Germany a little German boy in her railway compartment failed to obey his mother promptly and the mother said to him, "Now mind me, or the others here will think you are an American child!" Said an English writer after a visit to our country: "Boys seem ashamed to use to their circle of companions the word father, substituting flippant and irreverent epithets, which, if they did but realize it, at once degrade, not their parents, but themselves in the thought of all right-thinking people. Girls too often seem to look on their mother as a household institution provided in order that they might be free for all the frivolity of a giddy set."

It is pleasant after reading these criticisms to recall the words of Abraham Lincoln's stepmother: "I can say what not one mother in ten thousand can say of a boy. He never gave me a cross look, and never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested him. He was dutiful to me always."

Censors, not Children. Simple distaste will sometimes vitiate our observance of the fifth commandment. Our parents speak, and we wish they would be silent. Their manners are so old-fashioned, and their tastes are so barbarous. Their opinions are so obsolete. We are critics and censors and not children. *Christina Rossetti.*

Resolved: never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved: to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful with respect to any of our family. *Jonathan Edwards.*

A Cadet. After the battle of Manila a cadet lost his coat overboard

and was refused permission to jump in after it. He disobeyed, and when hauled on board after securing the coat was put under arrest. Brought before the admiral in charge, he explained that his mother's picture was in that coat, and it was the only picture he had of her. "My boy," said the Admiral, "a lad who risks his life to rescue his mother's picture will not be punished by me. You ought not to have disobeyed the order, but I congratulate you on having done so."

A Precious Memory. No heritage which a son can possess is worthy to be compared for a moment with the blessed consciousness of having done all that he could to make father and mother happy during their lifetime. An impressive little story was recently told by a man whose form is now bent and whose hair is white with years.

When he was a boy of twelve he was returning one evening from the hayfield, where he had been at work since daybreak, when his father met him with a request that he go to town to do an errand for him. Any one who has lived on a farm, and who knows what a day's work, "from sun-up to sun-down," means in haying time, will understand how the boy felt.

"I was tired, dusty and hungry," said the old man. "It was two miles to town. I wanted to get my supper, and to dress for the singing class. My first impulse was to refuse, and to do it harshly, for I was angry that he should ask me after my long day's work. If I did refuse, he would go himself. He was a gentle, patient old man. But something stopped me — one of God's good angels, I think.

"'Of course, father, I'll go,' I said heartily, giving my scythe to one of the men. He gave me the package.

"'Thank you, Jim,' he said. 'I was going myself, but somehow I don't feel very strong to-day.'

"He walked with me to the road that turned off to the town, and as he left me he put his hand on my arm and said again, 'Thank you, my son. You've always been a good boy to me, Jim.'

"I hurried into town and back again. When I came near the house I saw that something unusual had happened. All of the farm-hands were gathered about the door, instead of being at the milking or other chores. As I came near, one of the men turned to me with the tears rolling down his face.

"'Your father,' he said, 'is dead. He fell just as he reached the house. The last words he spoke were to you.'

"I am an old man now, but I have thanked God over and over again in all the years that have passed since that hour for those last words of my father — 'You've always been a good boy to me.'" *Youth's Companion.*

Japan's Devotion to an Ancestor. Three hundred years ago one of the Tokugawa clan received from his father the province of Owari, and a number of little statues of horses cast in gold, with direction to preserve them until some national emergency arose.

Although feudalism fell in 1874, and the house of Owari became quite poor, its successive heads strictly obeyed the injunction of their ancestor until a short time ago.

Then the family, believing that a national emergency had arisen, transferred the secret hoard, amounting to half a million dollars of American money, to the national treasury, and afterward publicly informed the spirit of their ancestor that the trust had been faithfully performed. *London Times.*

A child deserves little credit when honoring a father to whom all in the community look up with unbounded admiration. There is no temptation then to fail of giving loving honor. But when a father is a criminal, or a mother is an outcast, the child that tenderly gives honor to the unworthy representative of the all-worthy God has approval from God and commendation from man. That is honoring a parent as God's representative; that is doing a simple duty as a worthy child.

Honoring a parent of any sort does not involve the doing of wrong at the request or command of the parent. A true child is to obey a parent only "in the Lord"; but, even while firmly and tenderly refusing to do what God would not have done, honor should be shown to the representative of God as God's representative, while honor is also shown to God in refusing to dishonor Him by wrong doing. *Sunday School Times.*

II Thou shalt not steal

What the Eighth Commandment means. It is the law of honesty. "We are at least free from this contemptible sin of thieving. Whatever may be our faults, we are certainly honest," some may feel inclined to say. Alas! The very meaning of the word *honesty* has been degraded. It now means doing nothing which is technically illegal; but once it meant the honor, the nobleness which preferred equity to self-interest, and would rather suffer from guileless simplicity than profit by the mean cleverness which takes advantage of the ignorance of others. When St. Paul said, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men," he did not mean merely that his converts were not to be thieves or cheats. The Greek word **Καλὸς** which he uses, implies all moral beauty, all spiritual nobleness. The **Καλὸς Κἀγαθὸς** in Greek meant a man as he should be, a perfect man and an upright. It meant one who

"Wore without reproach
The grand old name of gentleman,"

as opposed to petty tricksters and cozeners, with no object but their own gain. *F. W. Farrar,* in *The Voice from Sinai.*

Various Forms of Stealing. You recall how Diogenes went around searching for an honest man, and how Pope declared that "An honest man's the noblest work of God." Is, then, strict honesty so rare a virtue? The man who is thoroughly honest has an honest intention in everything he does, he purposes to be true in every transaction. It is not alone the burglar and the pickpocket who steal. He who cheats a street-car company out of his fare, who has false measures or weights, who advertises falsely, who adulterates food, who gambles, who forges a note, all these alike take what is not theirs. One who runs in debt when he has no money to pay the debts with, and no prospect of having any, is just as much a thief as the one who steals money itself. In the recent life-insurance disclosures men high in office have been found so dishonest with funds entrusted to their care that their deeds can only be classified under the head of stealing.

Just for Bait. A sharp-eyed young man was walking listlessly past the hack-stand in the northwest of Washington, when he gave a slight start. There on the back seat of an old hack was a big, rusty-looking wallet. From the wallet the shrewd-looking young man glanced quickly at the drowsy-looking driver.

"Hey," called the young man, placing his hand on the hack door. "How

much'll you charge to drive me as fast as you can to the Pennsylvania station?"

"Seventy-fi' cents, suh, fo' a fas' drive."

"All right!" called the young fellow, and he pulled open the hack door and stepped in. "Take me down there as quick as you can."

"All right, suh," said the driver, and he urged his poor old horse to a pace of three miles an hour.

At the station the shrewd-eyed young man, wearing a very disgusted expression, stepped to the pavement. He thrust his hand into a pocket and produced three quarters, which he handed to the driver, giving him a suspicious glance. But the negro looked as innocent as a lamb as he took the silver and thanked his fare. When the shrewd-looking young man was well around the corner, the driver alighted from his seat and looked into the hack. The rusty old wallet was lying wide open on the floor. The darky broke into a chuckle as he picked up the wallet and thrust it into his inside pocket. Then he murmured half-aloud as he climbed back to his seat: "Dey's lots of 'em. I done heard a man say one is bo'n ev'y minute. I reckon it's so. Git ap, yo hoss!"

Half an hour later the hack was at its old stand. The black driver was again apparently dozing on his seat, and the big, comfortable, rusty wallet was again in full view on the back seat. *Washington Star.*

III Thou shalt not bear False Witness

Injuring the Reputation of Others. The Ninth commandment — the law of truthfulness and justice — forbids, in the first instance, malignant perjury, but it is meant further to prohibit all sin in words against our neighbor to the injury of that character and reputation which are dear to him as his life, and dearer than his goods. *F. W. Farrar.*

See how easy it is to do mischief! You insinuated against a certain man that there was something wrong in his case. You never can withdraw your insinuation. You lie against your fellow creature, and then apologize. You can not apologize for a lie! Your lie will go where your apology can never follow it. And men who heard both the lie and the apology will, with a cowardice that is unpardonable, say, when occasion seems to warrant their doing so, that "They heard that there was something or other about him, but they can not tell exactly what it is." So mischief goes on from year to year, and a lie is, in the meantime, more powerful than truth. It is always easier to do mischief than to do good. Let us, then, be careful about human reputation. *Joseph Parker.*

Misrepresentations. One person meets us in a moment of gaiety, and to that person we are always, thenceforth, light and frivolous. Another meets us in a somber mood, and to him we are forevermore stupid and morose. We are creatures of moods, but two mismatched moods, unless the Ninth Commandment hover over them, are likely to pass into permanent misrepresentation. Is not this the rule of a great deal of practice — perhaps of our practice — the slighter the contact the readier the witness? What can such witness be but false witness? *Charles Caverno, The Ten Words.*

Words can not be recalled. The story of the bee is thus described by Mr. F. A. Root in his work, *Bee Culture*:

"After a bee has stung you and torn itself away from the sting you will notice, if you look closely, a bundle of muscles near by, and partly enveloping the poison-bag. Well, the curious part of it is that, for some considerable time

after the sting has been detached from the body of the bee, these muscles will work with a kind of pumping motion, working the sting farther into the wound, as if they had a conscious existence and burned with a desire to wreak vengeance on the party attacked."

Words have a life of their own. Many a harsh word, many a vicious lie, many a scandal from a gossip's tongue has thus worked its "sting farther into the wound" and continued to ply its poison, even after its author has forgotten, and sometimes after the grave has closed over him. And like the bee's sting, the lie or the scandal can not be drawn back after it has been flung at a fellow mortal. *Homiletic Review.*

Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds,
But you can't do that when you're flying words,
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes drop back dead,
But God Himself can't kill them when they're said. *Carleton.*

How a Slander grows. Believe me, there is no sort of wickedness, no horror, no absurd tale you can not make idlers believe in if you set the right way about it. First a little humming sound, skimming the ground, like a swallow before a storm, *pianissimo, pianissimo,* murmuring and buzzing and spreading the poison as it goes. A breath catches it up; *piano, piano,* it glides into your ear adroitly. The harm is done; it takes root; it climbs; it travels, and *rinforzando* from mouth to mouth it travels like the devil. Then all at once, you hardly know how, you see it raising its head, hissing, swelling itself out, growing monstrous under your very eyes. It rises, takes its flight, whirls round you, clutches you, drags you along, bursts forth and thunders, and becomes, Heaven help us, a general shriek, *crescendo* — a universal chorus of hatred and proscription. *Beaumarchais,* in *The Barber of Seville.*

Silent False Witness. We may bear false witness not only by the words we say, but by the words we fail to say. Pope refers to this sin in the Prologue to the Satires: —

"Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering teach the rest to sneer."

Charlotte Fiske Bates has written these stanzas about "The Malice of Silence,"

Is it thy boast that no malicious word
Of any one escapes thy pen or tongue?
That through thee mischief never has been stirred,
Nor any heart been wrung?

Remember malice may with silence dwell:
Just praise thou owest, malice may withhold:
Thou canst do better, though thou doest well:
Hide not what should be told.

Two Good Rules. Remember that charity thinketh no evil, much less repeats it. There are two good rules which ought to be written on every heart: never believe anything bad about anybody unless you positively know it is true; never tell even that unless you feel that it is absolutely necessary, and that God is listening while you tell it. *Henry van Dyke.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

If men surmise that you are ungrateful towards your parents, no one will

believe that, if he does you a kindness, he will meet with gratitude in return. *Xenophon.*

Make yourself an honest man and then you may be sure that there is one rascal less in the world. *Carlyle.*

The love of Christ is the conducting medium to the love of all mankind. *Jowett.*

Speak something, my boy, that I may see thee. *Socrates.*

The sword of evil speech may stab as deeply as the sword of steel. *Woelfkin.*

When you hear an ill report about any one, halve and quarter it and then say nothing about the rest. *Spurgeon.*

The ill-timed truth we might have kept —
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say —
Who knows how grandly it had rung? *Sill.*

Draw near the board with plenty spread;
And if, in its accustomed place,
You see the father's reverent head,
The mother's patient, loving face,
Whate'er this life may hold of ill,
Thank God that these are left you still.
Youth's Companion.

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13.10.

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape. Prov. 19.5.

Speak not evil one of another. Jas. 4.11.

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Eph. 4.28.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips. Psa. 141.3.

Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Luke 12.15.

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. Gen. 9.6.

Withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 1 Tim. 5.13.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Have you been to father and mother all that loving sons and daughters ought to be — grateful, loyal, considerate, and attentive to their wishes even when they are far away? Are you truly kind to all — even your enemies? Can you say, I have made my heart clean? Is your conduct absolutely, transparently, unswervingly honest and honorable? Have you set such a watch before the door of your lips that you offend not with your tongue? Do you never sin even in

thought? "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" it is only when we confess our sins that God is "faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *F. W. Farrar.*

THE LESSON STORY

The last six commandments admonish us to love and reverence our parents and those in authority, to commit no murder, to be wholly honorable in all our dealings with others, to be pure in heart, to be just and truthful, to be contented. "The summary of the second table is that life is love."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Would communism be a sin against the spirit of the eighth commandment?

2. There should be liability in damages for the physical and mental suffering caused by publications made "without reasonable care." *Governor Pennypacker.*

Journalism that is honest and honorable is one of the nation's most precious inheritances; that which places notoriety and pelf above truth and virtue, and adopts as its tactics of war the stunning sensation rather than the calm statement of facts, is one of the nation's direst calamities. There is here a duty of conscience and of patriotism for Americans; may they ever be mindful of that duty! *John Ireland.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Whom had Moses appointed as leaders of the people in his absence? (Ex. 24.14.) 2. How long did Moses remain on the Mount? (Ex. 24.18.) 3. Read Moses' rehearsal of the people's sin in Deut. 9.8–29. 4. Did they break the first commandment or the second commandment? 5. What excuse did Aaron offer to Moses? (Ex. 32.22–24.) 6. What was Aaron's special qualification? (Ex. 4.14–16.) 7. What excuses might be offered for the people? What special reason at this time for the more severe condemnation of their sin? 8. How were they punished? (Verses 19–29.) 9. What became of the golden calf? (Verse 20.) 10. What king made golden calves for the people to worship? (1 Kings 12.25–33.) 11. Could the sacrifice Moses offered in verse 32 have availed? (See Psa. 49.7.) 12. What New Testament writer was willing, like Moses, to die for his people? (Rom. 9.3.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The Ten Commandments are followed by "Divers laws and ordinances" relating to the life and government of the Israelites. "Moses told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the people answered with one voice, and said, all the words which the Lord hath said will we do." After building an altar and offering sacrifice, and appointing Aaron and Hur as leaders during his absence, Moses again went up Mount Sinai into the midst of the cloud. Then follows a full description of the form and furnishings of the tabernacle, its services, and the ceremonies of consecrating Aaron and his sons as priests.

LESSON IV — JULY 28

THE GOLDEN CALF

Exodus 32.1–8, 30–35. (Read Exodus 32–34.) Commit vv. 34, 35.

Golden Text

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. 1 John 5.21.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 32.1–8, 30–35

1 And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

2 And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me.

3 And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron.

4 And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

5 And when Aaron saw *it,* he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow *is* a feast to the Lord.

6 And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat, and to drink, and rose up to play.

7 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves.*

8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

31 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

33 And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34 Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.

35 And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Up, make us gods.* It is an excited and clamorous throng speaking. (See verse 22.) *This Moses,* an expression of contempt. *Wot.* R. V., *know.*

4. *A calf.* It is supposed this was a copy of the Egyptian god Apis.

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WORSHIPPING THE GOLDEN CALF—*Tissot*

5. *When Aaron saw it.* When he saw that they accepted the image, as a representation of God.

7. *Thy people.* Moses is made to feel that he is identified with Israel, and must have the burden of them on his heart. *Terry.*

31. *On the morrow.* After the events recorded in 15–29.

31. *Moses returned unto the Lord.* He re-ascended Mount Sinai.

32. *If thou wilt forgive their sin —;* Supply *well.* See the italicized words in Dan. 3.15 and Luke 13.9, which are not in the Hebrew. *Blot me out of.* Compare Paul's words in Rom. 9.3. *Thy book.* The chosen people of God are regarded as enrolled or written in a book before God. Compare Psa. 69.28; Dan. 12.1. *Terry.*

33. Compare Ezek. 18.4.

34. *I will visit their sin upon them.* This may refer to their wandering forty years in the wilderness and dying without entering the Promised Land. (Num. 14.26–30.)

35. *Plagued.* R. V., *smote.* The Jews have a saying apparently founded on this text: "No affliction has ever happened to Israel in which there was not some particle of the dust of the golden calf." *Clarke.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *Fashioned it with a graving tool.* Apart from the fact that most of the bigger idols worshiped by the ancients had a wooden center, and were merely covered with gold plate, such passages as Isa. 40.19 and 30.22 prove, that the casting of gold for idols consisted merely in casting the metal into a flat sheet, which the goldsmith hammered out and spread into a coating of gold plate. Aaron's molten calf was also made in this way; it was first of all formed of wood, and then covered with gold plate, this is evident from the way in which it was destroyed; the image was first of all burnt, and then beaten or crushed to pieces, and powdered or ground to powder (Deut. 9.21.) *i. e.* the wooden center was first burnt into charcoal, and then the golden covering beaten or rubbed to pieces. *Delitzsch.*

Bronze Figure of the Egyptian God Apis. According to Wilkinson

4. *These be thy gods which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.* The Israelites did not intend to break the first commandment. They still believed in, and sought to worship Jehovah. But they had been long taught to look for a visible manifestation of God — some person or thing embodying, or supposed to embody, His glory and power. Moses was such to them hitherto. He was gone. They desired something in his place. The Hebrew word translated "gods" in the first and fourth verses is *Elohim,* the usual name of God; and was used by the Israelites in that sense. Their meaning was, "Make us God," *i. e.* something which will represent and embody God. And Aaron said, "This is thy Lord, O Israel, which brought thee up," *i. e.* it is intended to represent Him. This was a flagrant breach of the second commandment, though not of the first. *Josiah Porter.*

32. *If thou wilt forgive their sin.* It was noble of Moses to stand out, one man against a nation; it was nobler to plead their cause with an offended God: but grandest of all was his self-forgetfulness. The Lord had said, in the simple and bold language of the text. "Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation." No offer could have been more splendid. To accept it would avenge Moses for all he had suffered from the people, and save from certain distress in the future; the covenant with the patriarchs would be fulfilled, yet his name stands above theirs, as the real father of the nation. Was it not right, best, to take the offer? But the man had not forsaken the riches of Egypt for this. As he will not go forward without the very divine Presence, neither will he be made great without the people. Hope, ambition, life, Heaven itself he almost says, all that God can do for him, is bound up in their fate. "If thou wilt forgive their sins—;" he begins trembling, and his words break down before the awful possibility of rejection, and he cries out, "and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." If human intercession can have power with God, this must prevail. God does forgive. My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. *Charles M. Southgate.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *Break off the golden earrings.* To this day women of Egypt and Arabia adorn themselves with gold and silver coins and other ornaments to an extent quite unknown in more enlightened lands, and far beyond their apparent wealth, as shown in their garments or their dwellings. Bracelets, anklets, earrings, nose-rings, finger-rings, brooches, necklaces, and ornaments for the hair, are seen, not alone on the persons of the rich, but on those also who are scantily and coarsely clad, and who live in mud huts.

There are no savings banks in those lands, in which to deposit one's accumulations, nor are there any safe modes of investment at usury. The lack of confidence between man and man makes each person cling to what he has, as in safe hands only while it is in his hands. . . . The hoarding of gold and silver in coin, and in ornaments for the person, is well nigh universal in those lands. It begins in infancy. As the child grows in years, constant additions are made to its stock of precious metals in personal adornings. A bride's dowry is hung upon her person. A wife's wealth is carried there, the men store their treasures in coin and jewels out of sight, but not out of mind.

That this has been the state of things in all the intervening ages, in both Egypt and Arabia, the testimony of sacred and profane history bears ample witness. Look at the paintings and sculptures of the Egyptian tombs and temples in evidence of this! See also the treasure of gold and silver and precious stones, in the shape of personal ornaments, unearthed from the tombs of Egypt, and gathered in the museums of Boolag, Turin, the Louvre, and London. *H. Clay Trumbull, Oriental Social Life.*

2. *Your sons.* Earrings are worn in the East almost as much by men as by women. Most Assyrian and some Egyptian monarchs are represented with them. *Rawlinson.*

8. *They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them.* Out of the highway along which I started them. In oriental thought generally the "way" is the path or road that has been prepared for travel by those who

would go aright. The idea of a road as a highway of God's Kingdom shows itself all along in the Bible record. Again and again fidelity to God's service is spoken of as continuing in "the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in." *H. Clay Trumbull, Oriental Social Life.*

32. *Blot me out of the book of life.* In China the names of the persons who have been tried on criminal processes are written in two distinct books, which are called the Book of Life and the Book of Death: those who have been acquitted, or who have not been capitally convicted, are written in the former; those who have been found guilty, in the latter. These two books are presented to the Emperor by his ministers, who, as sovereign, has a right to erase any name from either; to place the living among the dead, that he may die, or the dead, that is, the person condemned to die, among the living that he may be preserved. *Adam Clarke.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Sinai, paragraph 67; Sinai Peninsula, paragraph 56.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did any one ever repeat to you the old adage that "Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do"? Aaron said of the Israelites that they were "set on mischief," and perhaps it was because they were idly waiting at the foot of Mount Sinai while Moses was absent from them. They had seen Moses go up into darkness and fiery flames, that encircled the mountain top, they had waited week after week for his return, and they may have begun to think that he had disappeared from their sight for ever. They must have a leader, and that would be Aaron, but Aaron, while a good "spokesman" for Moses, was too weak a man to rule them. They must have also, they think, something to represent God. In Egypt they had seen the bull Apis worshiped as a god; they will have such an image to represent the Lord.

For Older Pupils. It was while God was still manifesting His awful presence at Sinai, that Israel made the golden calf to worship, and it was "after the sop" of affection and confidence at the Last Supper, that Satan entered into Judas. "It is the man bringing his dividend from the bank door," says quaint John Newton, "who has most cause to dread the pilferer's hand." No religious atmosphere excludes temptation; no religious occupation destroys its power. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Shoes and Rations.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Keep Yourselves from Idols

The Pyramid of Vanities. When the City of Florence was under the power of Savonarola, he ended the celebration of the Carnival with a huge bonfire in the Piazza. White robed lads had gone from house to house asking for their idols, only they called them the *Anathema* or *the vanities.* George Eliot has described the collection in *Romola.* "The pyramid was sixty feet high, with shelves widening and widening toward the base till they reached a circumference of eighty yards. There were tapestries and brocades, pictures and sculp-

tures; handsome copies of Ovid, Boccaccio, Petrarca; boards and tables for all sorts of games; masks and masquerading dresses; all the implements of feminine vanity — rouge pots, false hair, mirrors; at the very summit, there was the unflattering effigy of a probably mythical Venetian merchant, who was understood to have offered a heavy sum for the collection of marketable abominations, and, soaring above him in surpassing ugliness, the symbolic figure of the old Carnival. On this last day, at evening, the pile of vanities was to be set ablaze to the sound of trumpets, and the ugly old Carnival was to tumble into the flames amid the songs of reforming triumph."

Most people would differ from Savonarola in his opinion as to what were idols, but all must admit that there are idols enough now for annual bonfires everywhere. Saint Paul, in the last verse of his Epistle written to the Christians, says as his farewell, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Recognized Idols. The Council of Trent decreed that "images were not only to be placed in the temples, but also to be worshiped as if the persons represented thereby were present;" and Pope Pius IV, said: "I most firmly assert that the images of Christ and of God and also of the saints are to be had and retained, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them."

The Russian Church, like the Catholic, carries its reverence for pictures to the point of idolatry. In the war between Japan and Russia, every Russian regiment had its picture, or "icon" as it is called, guarded by priests and deacons. General Kuropatkin's icon contained three larger and three smaller pictures of saints, and above them all a Russian cross. This icon, under the protection of a special guard, journeyed with him wherever he went.

Unrecognized Idols. In the city of Foochow they bring out great images and parade them along the streets. In Western lands, people have got rid of all this nonsense, but they have not got rid of the idols in their hearts. *A Chinese Christian.*

"Thou shalt have no other gods but me," we read, and our thoughts wander to heathen lands, where gods of wood and stone stand, as much the symbol of low intelligence as of moral degradation. But by the insistent law of the mirror our gaze is brought back to self. What do we see? Has God always stood first? When, day by day, He has given us opportunities to choose between His service and our own pleasure, which has gone unheeded? What need to cavil at the material of which our false god is made? What is the deepest desire in our hearts? What stands perpetually prominent in our thoughts? That, if it be not God, has usurped His place. What does it matter whether wood, stone, gold, pleasure, ambition, or something else is the material from which our idol is made! There, in His place, stands a colossal image of — *self!* May we not all plead guilty? *Edward J. Purchase,* in *The Pathway of the Tempted.*

If I this day have striven
With Thy blest Spirit or have bowed the knee
To aught of earth in weak idolatry,
I pray to be forgiven. *Lyra Anglicana.*

II The Spirit of Self-Sacrifice

Not all Self-Sacrifice is Useful. Moses felt the burden of his people's sins, and in his intercessory prayer for them he asks to have his own name blotted out of God's book if only they may be forgiven. God's answer is,

"Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." Throughout the Bible the lesson is taught that each one is responsible for his own sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and no other soul can die for it. Only the sacrifice of Christ can atone for the sins of others.

Just as useless as Moses' proposed sacrifice are countless sacrifices actually being made at the present day. Only that sacrifice is noble which is intelligent. Perhaps it is some fine-spirited man giving up his life work for the sake of a selfish wife who wishes to travel constantly. Perhaps it is some dutiful daughter giving up her longed-for college education, that she may remain at home with a mother who does not need her. "'What is the good of it all?' quoth little Peterkin." The story is told of two mountain climbers who braved great perils to ascend the summit of a noted peak in Switzerland, and when they were recounting their hair-breadth escapes in the village below, a Swiss woman looked calmly at them and asked, "What for?" This is the question which each one should ask himself and calmly answer, and only when the object is worthy of the proposed self-sacrifice, and when the self-sacrifice will promote that object, should it be considered in the light of a duty.

The Two Camels. The poet Browning tells the story of two camels, each of which wishes to serve his master faithfully. Both are laden with precious burdens which they are carrying across the desert. One of them speaks:

"My soul is bent on winning praise
From goodman lord and master — hump to hoof
I dedicate me to his service. How?
Grass, purslane, lupines, and I know not what,
Crammed in my manger? Ha, I see — I see!
No, master, spare thy money! I shall trudge
The distance and yet cost thee not a doit
Beyond my supper on this mouldy bran."

The other has far different views of devotion:

"No sprig
Of toothsome chevril must I leave unchewed!
Too bitterly should I reproach myself
Did I sink down in sight of Sebzevar,
Remembering how the merest mouthful more
Had heartened me to manage yet a mile!"

The result is told in these words:

"The too-abstemious brute
Midway broke down, his pack rejoiced the thieves,
His carcass fed the vultures; not so he,
The wisely thankful, who, good market-drudge,
Lay down his lading in the market place
No damage to a single pack. Which beast,
Think ye, had praise and patting and a brand
Of good-and-faithful servant fixed on flank?"

There must be a Moral Motive in Self-Sacrifice. True self-sacrifice is not aimless, nor wasteful. In itself it has no merit. The madman hurls himself from the precipice, or rushes into the fire, and his action is as aimless and as worthless as a hurricane or a conflagration. The patriot flings himself upon the advancing bayonets of the enemy, and the martyr walks, singing, to the

stake; but the one purchases by his blood the freedom of his country, and the other, by his costly testimony, vindicates and perpetuates the faith, that, by and by, blesses all men. Self-sacrifice with a moral motive is always fruitful, and justifies itself in the large economy of life. *Philip Stafford Moxom.*

Is Samson pulling down the pillars of the temple and killing himself as well as the Philistines, a self-sacrificing hero? Our answer will depend wholly on the motive which we impute to him. If we think he was actuated solely by the desire to k his enemies, who had put out his eyes and had made him work as a slave, hen his act will seem to us a revengeful, not a self-sacrificing act. On the other hand, if we see in his deed a desire to overthrow the power of Dagon, the god whom the Philistines worshiped, and exalt Jehovah, then we shall proclaim him a self-sacrificing hero.

The Martyr Spirit. "No man ever accomplished much for God or man without the martyr spirit," says Bishop Cyrus D. Foss. It is true that no one ever had a deep and permanent interest in any cause who had not also a willingness to sacrifice himself or his own interests for that cause. The self-sacrificing spirits of the Bible are enrolled in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, fitly called the picture-gallery of heroes. When John Hay, our Secretary of State, died, our country gratefully acknowledged its lasting debt to the self-sacrificing spirit which led him to devote his later years to public service. A man of wealth, he might well have preferred a life of ease. When a great bereavement and ill-health made him long to retire, his work was not finished and the appeal of duty prevailed over the call of self. The world may be sordidly selfish, but it gladly crowns the self-sacrificing spirits.

III The Ledgers of Eternity

How the Ledger of Eternity is Written. "If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." In His answer, the Lord, it will be observed, acknowledges the existence of the book referred to, calling it, "My book," and admits the possibility of His wiping out those who prove unworthy of a place therein — themselves, not their names only.

This brings to mind two things. A book is not necessarily a thing of paper. The Saxon word *Boc,* whence book comes, meant a beech-tree, before it meant a book. The bark of this tree was the substance to which the first English committed their writings: just as the Romans had the word *liber* for "book" from the same word denoting the inner bark of a tree, which was employed anciently for writing upon. The song of the Arval Brothers, the oldest Latin extant, was graved in brass; the law of Moses in stone. We go farther and discover the writings of God on "hearts of flesh." "Ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God: not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh."

The writing of the Spirit is not only in impressions that reach the heart through the ear, even were God Himself the Speaker, or through the eye, even when God is the Author of the writing or the Actor in the sublime drama. It comes out in every pure instinct, in every holy impulse, in every beautiful and tender feeling, in every upward tendency or effort or desire.

A man's character and history are woven into his being in letters that run through the whole piece. . . . The telltale marks are the deeds themselves. Every entry in this strange ledger is an act, whether of heart or head or hand,

which has, in the nature of things, the mysterious power of printing some legible hieroglyphic on the being of the doer and in the great book of nature.

Since this book is from God's hand, every item in it is of His handwriting, and He can certainly read His own writing, if no one else can. Yet every man is his own accountant, his own bookkeeper. He is only the recording angel. It is part of every mortal's doom that he must keep and carry with him to the final judgment that ledger of God which pertains to himself. It is a strict account of himself, written, so to speak, in the fabric of his being. Not one word can he alter. He is made a witness, an involuntary witness, against himself. Every entry has here a volition of his own; in other words, he alone is the one who has posted the ledger by doing the deed. There is no fear of falsifying the account.

God only, who has put it into the nature of things to make their own record, can blot out any part of that record. He can blot out transgression only by blotting out the old man and the old life. This He mercifully does by giving a new life and enabling the new man in Christ to live unto righteousness. *H. Rose Rae,* in *Homiletic Review.*

The Titles in Heaven's Book. Christmas Evans, the Welsh revivalist, at a public meeting of the London Bible Society where the Marquis of Anglesea presided told this dream:

I saw the soul of the Marquis in my dream, as it ascended unto the gates of Heaven, and I heard the angel that took him to the gates rap loudly and demand immediate admission. And the angel disappeared and came back and said, "I find no Marquis of Anglesea on the book of Heaven." Then the conducting angel said, "He was an old soldier and fought the battles of the Duke of York." The angel again disappeared and returned and said, "I find no old soldier of the Duke of York on the books of Heaven." Then Christmas Evans, continuing, gave other titles of the Marquis,—Master of Ordinance for the Kingdom of Great Britain, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and finally, President of the London Bible Society. Then, he says, the angel answered: "Oh, that is different. The names of the workers for the Lord are written here, but those other titles are unknown in Heaven."

A Startling Thought. Out into the starlit night we go, and gaze upwards. We are not looking at what is, but what has been. The panorama of the heavens is a record of past position, and even of past existences. So vast is the distance which separates me from yonder star at which I seem to gaze that countless year have rolled by since the rays which revealed the orb to me left it. Possibly centuries ago it ceased to exist; but its past is registered, every phase of it is visible from some point of God's universe. The whole question becomes intricate beyond conception when we think of how this star appeared as it was but a short time ago. That star as it was years ago, another as it was thousands of years ago. Out of the chaos, however, comes one startling thought. It is all registered indestructably by the law of ceaseless vibration. That same law is busy with my own life. My acts, my words, are perpetually registered, too. Just as certain is it. Somewhere in God's universe is the record of what I did and said yesterday and all the yesterdays of my life which have gone before. *Edward J. Purchase,* in *The Pathway of the Tempted.*

Whatever hath been written shall remain,
Nor be erased, nor written o'er again;
The unwritten only still belongs to thee,
Take heed and ponder well what that shall be. *Longfellow.*

Latimer's Warning. When Hugh Latimer was being examined by his enemies, he was somewhat careless of his answers, till he heard the scratch of a pen. Behind the curtains some one in hiding was taking down all he said. In preaching afterward he spoke about this experience and about his feelings at the time, and added, "My hearers, there is a recording pen always at work behind arras taking down all thou sayest, and noting all thou doest; therefore be thou careful that thy words and acts are worthy of record in God's Book of Remembrance."

SENTENCE SERMONS

Self is our greatest idol. *B. F. Meyer.*

Many virtues we set down in our assets find no entry in Heaven's books. *Ram's Horn.*

There is that in man which sooner or later is awakened to dissatisfaction with the gods of his own choosing. *W. Boyd Carpenter.*

Will worldly goods reach upward to Heaven and bribe the pen of the recording angel, that he cancel from God's book all vestige of our crimes? *Edward Irving.*

It is not easy to estimate the measure of love in a Moses and a Paul; for the narrow boundary of our reasoning powers does not comprehend it, as the little child is unable to comprehend the courage of warlike heroes. *Bengel.*

It is thus each year of life comes to us — for each day a clean white page; and we are artists whose duty it is to put something beautiful on the pages one by one; or we are historians, and must give to the page some record of work or duties or victory to enshrine and carry away. *Phillips Brooks.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

He said he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them. Psa. 106.23.

We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. 1 Cor. 8.4.

God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4.24.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name. Mal. 3.16.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We do not bow down and worship idols made of molten gold, but have we no idols of our own making? Let us ask ourselves this question, "What is my idol? What holds the first place in my life?" If we are not satisfied with our answers, let us resolutely determine to

"Break down every idol, cast out every foe,"

and kneel only before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God.

THE LESSON STORY

While Moses was on the Mount communing with God, what was happening at

the base of the mountain? The fickle people had grown weary of waiting for his return; an absence of six weeks had made them speak scornfully of "this Moses, the man that brought us up," and they had demanded a visible god to worship. Aaron's was not a masterful personality like Moses; he yielded at once to the clamor of the people, and made for them a molten calf out of their golden earrings. Then he built an altar before it, and they offered burnt offerings thereon. Aaron called it "a feast to the Lord," but they worshiped the graven image.

To Moses on Mount Sinai God revealed what his people had done, and proposed to destroy them all and make of Moses a great nation, but Moses effectually interceded in their behalf. When Moses descended and saw the extent of their sin, beheld them dancing around their idol, so great was his righteous wrath that he threw down and broke the tables of stone on which were written the commandments. He felt it necessary to punish them heavily for their sin. The golden calf he had burnt and ground to powder and cast into the water which they drank. Summoning the sons of Eli, who were "on the Lord's side," he bade them slay the chief transgressors. Then with heavy heart he returned again to intercede with God because of their sin. "If Thou wilt forgive their sin—" (and then in the pause we "hear him sob," as Mr. Moody was wont to say); "and if not, blot me, I pray, out of thy book which thou hast written." Those who have sinned must suffer for their own sin, God will visit their sin upon them, but the Angel of His Presence shall go with them, and with this comforting assurance Moses returned to his people.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The reaction which often succeeds seasons of religious fervor.
2. The characters shown by Moses and Aaron in this event.
3. The world is ruled by a few masterful men.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Describe the ark of the testimony and its contents. (Ex. 25.10–22; Heb. 9.4.) 2. What was done with the loaves of shew bread? (Lev. 24.8, 9.) 3. How did Jesus enforce His teachings in regard to the Sabbath by a reference to David's eating the shew bread? (Matt. 12.1–8.) 4. Read a description of the candlestick in Ex. 25.31–37. 5. For what purpose was the laver? (Ex. 30.18–21.) 6. Describe the altar of burnt offering. (Ex. 27.1–8.) 7. Study Ex. 35 to 40, and draw a plan of the tabernacle, surrounded by the court, locating the furniture. 8. What did the tabernacle mean to the Israelites? 9. Of whom was the tabernacle a type? (John 1.14.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Moses continued his communion with God, at first in the Tent of Meeting outside the camp and then again on the summit of Mount Sinai. He pleaded for God's presence with them in their journeyings; "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." When he descended from the Mount carrying a new table of testimony, his face so shone that the people could not look upon him.

THE TABERNACLE

Exodus 40.1–13, 34–38. (Read Exodus 35–40.) Commit vv. 34, 35.

Golden Text

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Exodus 40.34.

LESSON TEXT Exodus 40.1–13, 34–38.

1 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,
2 On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.
3 And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail.
4 And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the candle-stick, and light the lamps thereof.
5 And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle.
6 And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.
7 And thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and shalt put water therein.
8 And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate.
9 And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that *is* therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof; and it shall be holy.
10 And thou shalt anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.
11 And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.
12 And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.
13 And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.
34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.
35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.
36 And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys:
37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.
38 For the cloud of the Lord *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2. *On the first day of the first month.* Of the second year after the Exodus. See verse 17. *Of the tent of the congregation.* R. V., *of the tent of meeting.*

3. *The ark of the testimony.* See Ex. 25.16. The testimony of the Moral Law. *Cover.* R. V., *screen. The vail.* The curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the tabernacle, described in Ex. 26.31–33.

4. *Set in order the things.* The twelve cakes of shew-bread in two rows.

5. *Before the ark of the testimony.* In the holy place before the veil which shut off the ark in the Holy of Holies. *The hanging.* R. V., *The screen.* This curtain is described in 26.36.

6. *The altar of the burnt offering.* See 27.1–8.

7. *The laver.* See 30.18–21.

8. *The court.* See 27.9–18. *The hanging at the court gate.* R. V., *the screen of the gate of the court.*

9. *The anointing oil.* See 30.23–33. *Vessels.* R. V., *furniture.*

12. *Aaron and his sons.* The account of their consecration is given in Lev. 8.1–13.

34. *A cloud.* The cloud which had directed their journeyings. Ex. 13.20-22. See also Num. 9.15–23.

38. *The fire was on it by night.* R. V., *and there was fire therein by night.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

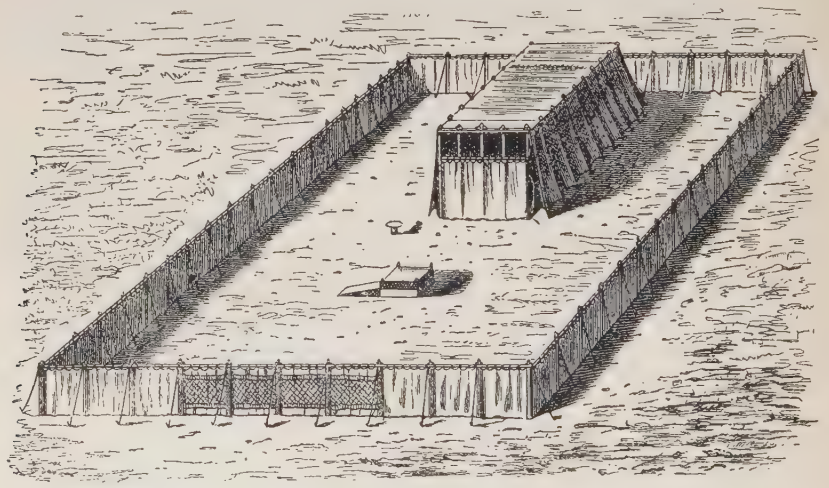
2. *The tabernacle.* On the pitching of tents the tabernacle was ever the center of the entire assembly; and whilst the priests and Levites formed an immediate cordon round it, the tents of the entire assembly surrounded them — Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon to the north; Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh to the south; Dan, Ashur, and Naphthali to the east; and Reuben, Simeon, and Gad to the west. The encampment, indeed, presented the appearance of a gigantic wheel, — the tabernacle and tents of the priests forming its box, so to speak, and the lines between the several tribal encampments the twelve spokes. Thus, to every tribe the tabernacle was equally visible.

The tabernacle proper was an oblong of shittim planks, plated with gold and fitted with silver, thirty cubits in length, ten in breadth, and ten in height. Over this wooden framework hung four coverings in such a way as to simulate a tent, whence the name of the whole. The innermost covering was in ten strips so joined as to form two halves, which were united by gold hooks and blue eyes, and consisted of tapestry of white and purple and scarlet and blue, with cherubim interwoven. The three other coverings acted as tent cloths outside this more brilliant and symbolic one, and was made of cloth of goat's hair, the covering of Arab tents to this day, of reddened ram's skins, the common red leather of Syria and Palestine, and of the skins of the seacow respectively. On the open or outside a curtain of the same material as the innermost covering, with the exception of the figures of the cherubim, was suspended on five pillars of gilded acacia sunk in copper sockets, and formed the entrance. Within, the tabernacle proper was divided into two parts by another curtain called the veil, of the same materials as the tapestry of the ceiling, and suspended on four gilded pillars of acacia sunk in silver sockets; the part within the veil being a cube of ten cubits in the edge, and called, according to the common Hebrew idiom for preëminent excellence, the Holy of Holies, or the Holiest; the remaining space, of the same breadth and height but double the length, being called the Holy Place. Around the Tabernacle proper ran an open space, one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits broad, called the Court, enclosed by curtains of twisted white byssus, hung by the aid of pegs and cords upon sixty pillars of acacia five cubits high, with silver capitals and connecting rods and brass sockets, these curtains being absent for a space

of twenty cubits on the east side, which was closed by a curtain of material similar to that which formed the entrance to the Holy Place.

The altar was a square portable coffer of acacia, copper-plated within and without, and filled with earth or rough stones so as to form a level hearth; it was surrounded by a raised platform along which the officiating priest could move, reached by an inclined plane on the west side; at the four corners of the altar were projections like the horns of oxen; its utensils — its ash-pans, its shovels, its basins, its flesh hooks, its pans for fuel — were of copper.

The laver was a round basin resting upon a pedestal, both basin and support being made of the copper mirrors of the women who served before the door of the tabernacle; it was used by the priests for purposes of purification in the services of the Holy Place and of the altar of burnt-offering.



The Tabernacle Without Its Coverings

The altar of incense was a portable box of acacia fitted with horns like the altar of burnt-offering, and so overlaid with thin plates of gold on its sides, its top, and its horns, as to be appropriately called the Golden Altar; it stood against the veil. The table of shew-bread, or face-bread, was an ornamental acacia table entirely plated with gold, placed on the west side; upon it were laid plates, goblets, and sacrificial spoons, all of gold; the table received its name from the cakes of bread which were exposed upon it "before the face" of the Lord.

The golden candlestick was a lamp standing opposite the table of shew-bread, with seven arms ornamented with almond blossoms, made throughout of wrought gold, its needful appliances being also of gold.

In the Holy of Holies there was but one article of furniture — the Ark of the Covenant or of the Testimony. It consisted of two parts — the Ark proper, and the Capporeth or Mercy-seat. The Ark proper was a rectangular acacia box, plated within and without of the purest gold; within it were placed the two stone tables given to Moses on Sinai, and subsequently the Book of the Law, Aaron's rod that budded, and a pot of manna. The capporeth which formed the lid of the box just described, was a plate of mas-

sive gold, having at either end a golden cherub, the faces of which were turned toward each other, and the wings of which overshadowed the space beneath. It was within that sacred space, aglow with gold, dark with the shechinah, that Jehovah had said, "And there will I meet with thee." *Alfred Cave,* in *The Scriptural Doctrine of Sacrifice and Atonement.*

3. *The ark of the testimony.* Although the ark with its contents was removed for a time from Solomon's Temple, because of sacrilege, it was returned in the days of Josiah. (2 Chron. 35.1–3.) When the temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar the ark disappeared. In the second Temple there was no ark in the Holy of Holies. A foundation-stone on which it would have rested was there, and blood, or life, was sprinkled on that. But what gain would there have been in preserving the original tablets of the covenant? The form of the covenant was preserved in the Hebrew Roll of the Law. And to this day, in every Jewish synagogue, a sacred Roll of the Law is carefully kept in an ark, or casket, from which it is taken out to be read. *Sunday School Times.*

Ark that rode the Deluge wave
Found on Ararat her grave,
All her stalwart gopher-wood
Rotted in that solitude;

Ark that held the holy things,
Shadowed by the golden wings,
Fallen into dust, has blown
Round the hills where once it shone.

Yet the Covenant is true,
God hath kept His oath with you;
In the humblest heart behold,
Something costlier than gold!—
Hush! within that quivering shrine
Broods the Immanent Divine!

Frederick Lawrence Knowles.

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

13. *The Priest's Office.* The word "High Priest" has, to our modern ears, no very special or tender significance; but to an ancient Jew it was as significant as the word "Mother" is to us. The High Priest was the living embodiment of God's pity for the sinful; and he was "taken from among men" that he might be able to understand men when pleading for them with God. *G. H. Knight.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Sinai, paragraph 67. Sinai Peninsula, paragraphs 57 and 58.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When election day dawns in the various wards of some of our large cities, small houses in which the voting is to be carried

on seem to have sprung into existence as if by magic. The houses are built in sections and are very quickly put together and taken down again. The tabernacle which was to the Israelites their place of meeting with God during their long sojourn in the wilderness of Sinai and afterwards in the Land of Promise was built in like manner so that it could be taken apart when they left one camping place and quickly erected in the next one. It had been long in building; the most skilled workmen had fashioned it out of the most valuable materials. At last it was completed, and we read to-day a brief account of the way in which it was to be set up.

If you were giving a description of this church of ours, where would you begin — with the street on which it faces, and the outside of the building, and afterwards take up the interior with its furnishings, or would you begin with the pulpit first, then the organ, afterwards the pews, and speak of the size and style of the church building last of all? The description which we have before us of the tabernacle begins with the center of all, the innermost shrine, the ark of the testimony, and reaches the court outside last of all. Who is it that is giving directions to Moses in regard to the setting up of the tabernacle? God begins with the place where He dwells. Let us follow Him as Guide, and see if we can not get a very clear idea of this building and its furnishings.

For Older Pupils. Jacob, you remember, knew that God was at Hebron where there was an altar, but he was surprised to find Him at Bethel. The Old Testament is a record of a people who were being trained to know God. In their wilderness wanderings they had not yet learned that God is a Spirit dwelling everywhere, a truth which needs to be emphasized even in these days. "With what awe one enters St. Mark's in Venice and passes beneath the arches under which Napoleon passed a century ago and Titian four hundred years ago," comments a traveler. "What a solemn hush comes over the soul as one stands in the darkened interior. 'Surely this is the house of God.' Do you think it would be easier to be religious if you could live close to St. Mark's? The second day you would notice that your guide, while never failing to bend before every altar, would not hesitate to rob you; that the priests who at first seemed so religious were really dirty, and that the atmosphere which before seemed holy was only damp and musty. Where, then, can be found a real house of God?" To the Israelites the tabernacle was the real house of God. During the first year in the wilderness the Ten Commandments and minor laws and regulations had been given the people, and thus the foundations laid of their government, which Josephus first calls a Theocracy. "Our lawgiver," he says, "had no regard to monarchies, oligarchies, or republics, but ordained a government to be what, by a strained expression, may be called a Theocracy," that is, a direct government by God Himself. The place where God was to dwell must be most carefully built, and all the regulations in regard to its services most carefully observed.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. The Way into the Holiest of All was not yet made Manifest

The Symbolism of the Tabernacle was for "The Time then Present." When God appointed ceremonies and symbols for the Jewish tabernacle He was dramatizing His instruction. He wanted men to know Him, and to be like Him

in character. How can He make them know? He saw that at that time and among that people, the most effective way would be to teach them through their sense of sight and through their emotional nature. The tabernacle was an object lesson, divinely chosen to teach truth. *Alvah S. Hobart.*

The Old Testament foreshadows Things to come. You remember that after His death and resurrection Christ appeared to two disciples as they were going to Emmaus, but "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." After they had told Him about the events which had happened and added, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," Christ said to them: "O slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" and beginning at Moses and the prophets He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. When Paul was a prisoner at Rome, many came to see him and to them "He expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."

To Christ and to the apostles the Old Testament foreshadowed (Col. 2.17) the things to come. The tabernacle was "a figure for the time then present," teaching to the childhood of the race the same knowledge of God, the same doctrines of communion and reconciliation with Him, as are taught to the race in its maturity in the Gospels and Epistles.

The ninth chapter of Hebrews shows the analogy and the difference between the office of the high priest of the tabernacle and Christ, "The High Priest of the good things to come." "Into the Holy of Holies the high priest entered alone, once in the year, not without blood, which he offereth for himself and for the errors of the people. The Holy Spirit thus signifying, that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is yet standing. . . . But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."

Why the Way into the Holiest was not earlier made manifest. Men sometimes say, why was not Jesus Christ brought into the world a great while before? Because the world was not ready for the transfer to the higher change; the world was still under the law, it still must be under the law. But when Christ comes, then comes the second epoch, the ideal; and Christ stands before the Jewish race and before the human race as the ideal of life. Now the nature of the command is changed — it is no longer, This do and thou shalt live — it is, Follow me; it is no longer Obey a law — it is, Follow an ideal; pattern yourself after the example of Christ. *Lyman Abbott,* in *The Outlook.*

II In the Secret of His Presence

The Priest's Prerogative. If we are Christian people, we have the priest's prerogative. And what is that? To pass behind the curtain and into the sanctuary. You will find, in some ruined old abbeys, a path worn on the hard stones of the pavement, by which the ministers of the altar passed continually into the secret place. Have our feet worn a way into the inmost shrine? What sort of priest is he who never, when he can help it, visits the

inner chamber where God dwells? We have the priest's prerogative. Oh! that we used it more! *Alexander Maclaren.*

An Unused Privilege. What if the world were bare of plants and blossoms, except upon one acre of its surface, where trees and shrubs and flowers grew in profusion, would not pilgrimages be made from the ends of the earth to gaze with wonder and delight upon its beauty? Yet every field gives exhibitions of the same creative, beneficent power, and who regards them? What if once a year a book were opened, the one book in the world that could show us authoritively how to make the best of life, and that drew wide the veil beyond death? Would not men everywhere crowd to hear the oracle? Such a book may be found unheeded and unopened in many a house. What if we could pray to God but once in our lives? Think of the petitions, the half-desperate hope, the fear, the agony, crowded into that one petition! We can speak to Him at any moment, and often forget to do it at all. *Youth's Companion.*

If Thou seek Him, He will be found. Form the habit of going off by yourself at a fixed hour every day "to see what God has to say to you." Listen and find if there is not some answer, and what that answer is. I have known a man who told me he had such a place of conference or rendezvous in the attic of his store. He went upstairs every morning. No one need see, no one need ask why, or did ask. He came to his "oratory." In the New Testament it is called a "closet." There he could sit on a box he had for the purpose; he could let the downstairs cares drop off; he could and did forget the prices of sugar and flour and candles and the rest; he forgot the mail and the unanswered letters so far that he could ask what God wanted him to do and to be that day. He did ask, and he waited five minutes before he went downstairs, to see what answer came. Sometimes he had his answer. Sometimes he thought he did not. But I have suspected that he always had it, though he did not always have it in his own way. I think he went downstairs better able to work with God that day than if he had not gone up, and better able to carry out the large laws of life; and this, whether he was conscious or was not conscious of God's reply to his questions. *E. E. Hale.*

The spirit of God dwelleth in You. Does the thought ever occur to us, "What a home mine would be, if Christ were actually dwelling in it for a single week, going out and in, interesting Himself in all my concerns, sympathizing both with my sorrows and with my joys, speaking to me of how I am living my life here, directing me in all my difficulties, speaking to me, too, of things transcending this poor life altogether? What holy strength would come to me from that divine companionship!" Do we ever think of this? Then how wonderful the thought that something even better than all this would be, is actually promised by Him to all that "love Him"! And that better thing is to have Him in all the graciousness and power of His own glorious life, not merely an outward Visitant but an inward Resident, a Guest not merely in the home, but in the soul itself. *G. H. Knight.*

III The Glory of the Lord Filled the Tabernacle

Glory is Excellence in Manifestation. The glory of the sun is in his out-streaming rays. The glory of nature is the beauty of the earth shown in mountain and valley, in lake and river, in forest and prairie. It is the gold

of the flaming sunset; it is the silver gleam of the glancing river; it is the spotless ermine of the everlasting mountains. So the glory of God is the divine excellence streaming forth in days of moral splendor. The heavens declare the glory of God, and in 2 Cor. 4.6 it is declared that this glory is in the face of Jesus Christ. *S. S. Mitchell,* in *The Staff Method.*

Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of ev'ry sphere
Yet to each loving heart how near. *O. W. Holmes.*

Reflecting as a Mirror the Glory of the Lord. What is the "glory" of the Lord? The word "glory" is a stranger in current speech, and our first duty is to seek out its equivalent in working English. It suggests at first a radiance of some kind, something dazzling or glittering, some halo such as the old masters loved to paint round the heads of their Ecce Homos. But that is paint, mere matter, the visible symbol of some unseen thing. What is that unseen thing? It is that of all unseen things the most radiant, the most beautiful, the most divine, and that is Character. On earth, in Heaven, there is nothing so great, so glorious as this. The word has many meanings; in ethics it can have but one. Glory is character, and nothing less, and it can be nothing more. The earth is "full of the glory of the Lord" because it is full of His character. "The Beauty of the Lord" is character. "The effulgence of His Glory" is character. "The Glory of the only Begotten" is character, the character which is "fullness of grace and truth." Glory, then, is not something intangible, or ghostly, or transcendental. If it were this how could Paul ask men to reflect it? By reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord we are changed. Reflect the character of Christ, and you will become like Christ. *Henry Drummond,* in *The Changed Life.*

Full of the Glory of the Lord. You try to look on this life of Christ as the life you desire to make your own; you are following after, but all your religious life is a struggle. It is a perpetual pursuit. It is expressed by that modern phrase, "Christian Endeavor." The highest type of religious life is not a perpetual endeavoring. I want to put before you the highest type, rooted in law, inspired by loyalty, and yet having as its consummation and its climax God dwelling in you: you so near to Him, and He so near to you, that all your life flows spontaneously out of His life that bubbles up as a fountain within the soul. The fruits of such a life are love and joy and peace. The fruits of conscience are not. Let a man undertake to live the life of conscience, and his life will not be love — he will be all the time thinking of himself; nor joy — he will all the time be wretched because remorseful; nor peace — he will all the time be at war with himself. But let a man have the Spirit of God dwelling in him, let him have a great love for God, a great hope, because God is in the world, and his life will be one of joy and peace. Truly it is a peace that passeth all understanding. Such a life is no longer a wandering in the wilderness, a following the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night; it is resting in the Temple at Jerusalem, full of the Shekinah, the Glory of God. *Lyman Abbott,* in *The Outlook.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The divine life within, like the Shekinah in the Holy of Holies of the

Jewish tabernacle, is often veiled from external observation by a shaggy covering. *J. E. C. Sawyer.*

God has two thrones, one in the highest Heaven, one in the lowliest heart. *Van Dyke.*

God has written day by day His revelations as He has given you day by day your daily bread. *Ruskin.*

By faith the wilderness can become the suburb of Heaven, and the woods the vestibule of glory. *Spurgeon.*

The Holy of Holies was left empty to teach thee, O Israel, that no place containeth the Eternal One, but thine heart is His sanctuary. *Hillel.*

No large growth in holiness was ever gained by one who did not take time to be often and long alone with God. *Phelps.*

Five minutes spent in the companionship of Christ every morning — aye, two minutes, if it is face to face and heart to heart — will change the whole day, will make every thought and feeling different, will enable you to do things for His sake that you would not have done for your own sake or for any one's sake. *Drummond.*

I can hardly imagine it possible that a real and deep sense of the holiness of holy things can exist, without a feeling of reverence, of awe, of holy fear; without a shrinking from speaking or talking lightly of holy places, and holy ordinances. *T. H. Arnold.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. John 5.46.

I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Psa. 122.1.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9.24.

If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. John 24.23.

We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Heb. 8.1, 2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Said a great king once, "Where I sleep, there is the palace." Each one of us may say, "Where I am, there is God's tabernacle." "See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount" were the words ringing in the ears of Moses as he came down from Mount Sinai to become the architect of God's dwelling place, the tent of worship. We need the heavenly pattern in making our lives the temples where God may dwell.

THE LESSON STORY

In obedience to Moses' command the people brought their offerings for the tabernacle till he was obliged to stop them because there was more than

enough. At length the tabernacle was built "As the Lord had commanded, and Moses blessed the workers." On the first "New Year's Day" after their departure from Egypt it was set up at the base of Mount Sinai. The court was one hundred and fifty by seventy-five feet and was enclosed by white linen "hangings," or curtains, seven and a half feet high attached by hooks to pillars of acacia wood set in copper sockets. Facing the entrance into the court was the altar of burnt-offering, where the sacrifices were offered, and between the altar and the tabernacle itself was the laver, a copper vessel filled with water for use of the priests in their services. The tabernacle proper stood in the center of the western end of the court, and was forty-five feet long by fifteen feet wide and fifteen feet high. A veil or curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet divided it into two compartments. In the first, or holy place, at the right of the entrance stood the table of shew-bread, at the left the golden candlestick, and in front before the veil the golden altar of incense. Back of the veil, in the holy of holies, which was a perfect cube fifteen feet each way, there was the ark, in which there were stone tablets, covered by the mercy seat and surmounted by the cherubim. In connection with the erection of the tabernacle all the furnishings were anointed and Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priest's office.

"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." Throughout all their journeyings they waited for this cloud to direct them; as long as it rested on the tent they remained, when it was taken up they journeyed onward.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Gal. 3.24, 25.)
2. The use and abuse of religious symbolism.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What directions had been given in regard to the preparation of the incense? (Ex. 30.34–38.) 2. Where was the fire for burning the incense to be obtained? (Lev. 9.24; Ex. 26.12.) 3. What special honor had been granted Nadab and Abihu? (Ex. 24.9, 10; Lev. 8.) 4. Why was this severe judgment necessary at this time? 5. What was the apparel of the priests? (Ex. 28.40.) 6. When King Saul offered costly gifts to Jehovah which he had been commanded to destroy, what was God's message to him through Samuel? (1 Sam. 15.22.) 7. Why was Uzza stricken with death? (2 Sam. 6.1–7.) 8. Read the story of Dathan and Abiram in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers. 9. In the early history of the Christian Church, what two violations of commands were made examples? (Acts 5.1–11.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The first chapter of Leviticus gives the laws in regard to the burnt offerings, meat-offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings, and then recounts the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and Aaron's first offerings for himself and the people.

LESSON VI — AUGUST 11

THE SIN OF NADAB AND ABIHU

(Temperance Lesson)

Lev. 10.1–11 (Read Lev. 8.11.) Commit v. 8.

Golden Text

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Prov. 20.1.

LESSON TEXT Leviticus 10.1–11.

1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not.

2 And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This *is it* that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

4 And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

5 So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

6 And Moses said unto Aaron and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people; but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled.

7 And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the Lord *is* upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

8 And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying,

9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations:

10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

11 And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Strange fire which he commanded them not.* The nature of the offense of Nadab and Abihu has been variously interpreted, but whether the incense was not prepared according to the law, the fire was not taken from the altar, the offering was not made at the right time, or they were under the influence of wine (suggested by verse 9), can not be determined.

2. *Fire from the Lord.* (See Lev. 9.24.) God was obliged to vindicate Himself before the congregation as One who would not suffer His commandments to be broken with impunity. *Delitzsch.*

3. *This is it that the Lord spake.* See Ex. 19.22; 29.44. *Them that come nigh me.* The priests. *Aaron held his peace.* Aaron was silent; any expres

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A High Priest—*Tissot*

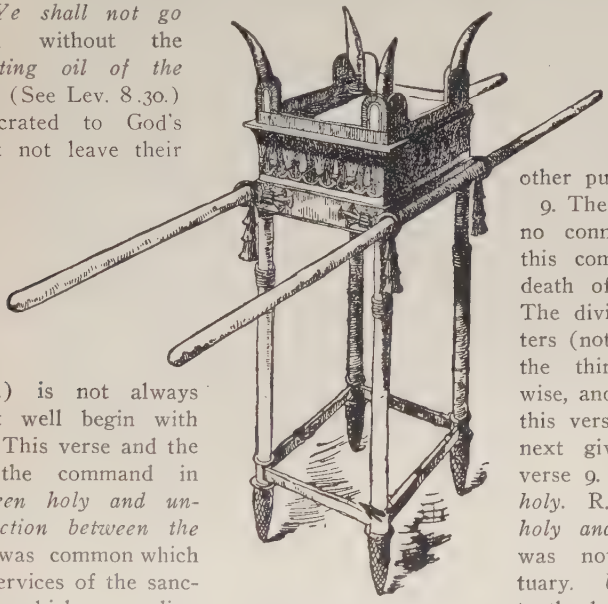
sion of grief would have been a complaint against the justice of God's judgment.

4. *Brethren.* A general term for kinsmen.

5. *In their coats.* The long white tunics worn by Nadab and Abihu as priests.

6. *Eleazar and Ithamar.* Aaron's surviving sons. *Uncover not your heads.* R. V. *let not the hair of your heads go loose.* This and rending the clothes were signs of mourning. Later, all signs of mourning were prohibited to priests. (See Lev. 21.10, 11.) *Lest ye die and lest wrath come upon all the people.* R. V., *that ye die not, and that he be not wroth with all the congregation.*

7. *Ye shall not go* *out.* To the
burial without the camp. *The*
anointing oil of the Lord is upon
you. (See Lev. 8.30.) They were
consecrated to God's service and
might not leave their duties for any
other purpose.



The Altar of Incense

A. D.) is not always 9. There probably was
might well begin with no connection between
10. This verse and the this command and the
for the command in death of Aaron's sons.
between holy and un- The division into chap-
distinction between the ters (not made till about
That was common which the thirteenth century
the services of the sanc- wise, and a new chapter
thing which according this verse.
sion defilement by being next give the reasons
11. *By the hand of Moses.* R. V., *by Moses.* verse 9. *Put difference*
holy. R. V., *make* a
holy and the common.
was not suitable
tuary. *Unclean.* Any-
to the laws would occa-
touched or eaten.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *Which he commanded them not.* In all true service of God it is essential that we serve Him in the way of His appointment. You would be grievously plagued if you had in your house a woman who was continually running up and down stairs, roaming into every room, opening every closet, moving this piece of furniture and dusting that, and generally keeping up a perpetual stir and worry; you would not call this service, but annoyance. All that is done contrary to orders is disobedience, not service; and if anything be done without orders it may be excessive activity, but it certainly is not service. *Spurgeon.*

2. *There went out fire from the Lord and devoured them.* When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, He said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." You see that God here required from Moses a mark of respect, not merely the feeling of respect, but an outward mark or sign of the feeling, "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." So when He was about to give

the law to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai, He required the people to sanctify themselves two days, and wash their clothes on the third, and to fence the mountain off, so that whoever dared to touch the mountain on which God was manifesting His presence was to be put to death. So, too, those who presumed to touch holy things, that they might not touch, were destroyed. The people of Bethshemesh were smitten because they looked into the ark of the Lord; and when, afterwards, David was bringing up the ark from Kirjath-jearim, the oxen that were drawing it stumbled, and a person named Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for this the anger of the Lord was kindled, and he smote Uzza. This was a striking instance, for we might think that the motive, that of preventing the ark from falling, was a good motive, and would excuse the forbidden action: but no; God's express commands are not to be broken for any seeming advantage; God could have saved His own ark, and it was faithlessness in Uzza, as well as want of reverence. To all the holy places, things, and observances of the temple, the same reverence was exacted: God hallowed it to put His name there. *Thomas Kerchever Arnold.*

3. *Before all the people I will be glorified.* "The essence of their sin was this, that it was will-worship; worship in which they consulted not the revealed will of God regarding the way in which He would be served, but their own fancies and inclinations. We can not look upon the case as if their act had been merely a private matter, personal to themselves alone. This was not and could not be. It was a peculiarly public act: it took place before the sanctuary, where all the people were assembled. What was the influence of this act likely to be if it passed unrebuked and unpunished? And when we remember the peculiar circumstances of the occasion,— that the whole ceremonial of the day was designed in a special manner in which Jehovah, their King and their God, would be worshiped,— it certainly is not so hard to see how it was almost imperative that in the very beginning of Israel's national history, God should give them a lesson on the sanctity of His ordinances and His hatred of will-worship, which should be remembered to all time."

9. *Do not drink wine nor strong drink.* When we contemplate the camp of Israel, we may observe three circles, and the innermost of those circles had its center in the sanctuary. There was first the circle of war; then the circle of Levites round about the Tabernacle; and lastly, the innermost circle of priests, ministering in the holy place. Now let it be remembered that the believer is called to move in all those circles. He enters into conflict, as a man of war; he serves, as a Levite, in the midst of his brethren, according to his measure and sphere; finally, he sacrifices and worships, as a priest, in the holy place. And it is as we are enabled to serve aright in that holy circle that all other relations and responsibilities are rightly discharged. Hence, anything that incapacitates us for our priestly functions — everything that draws us off from the center of that innermost circle, in which it is our privilege to move — everything in short, that tends to disarrange our priestly relation, or dim our priestly vision, must, of necessity, unfit us for the service which we are called to render, and for the warfare which we are called to wage. *C. H. Mackintosh.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

6. *Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes.* Eastern people are and always have been demonstrative in their grief. To tear out or cut off the

hair was a sign of grief, as was also the custom of letting the hair grow long and fall loosely over the head and face. Rending the clothes was one of the commonest tokens of sorrow. "Jacob rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days." "They do take a knife," says an old Jewish writer, "and holding the blade downward, do give the upper garment a cut on the right side, and then rend it a hand's breadth. This is done for the five following relatives, brother, sister, son, daughter, or wife; but for father or mother the rent is on the left side, and in all the garments."

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Sinai, paragraph 67. Rameses to Sinai, paragraphs 59–63.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Our fourth lesson this year was the story of Cain and Abel. What offering did each one bring to God? Whose offering was accepted? Why was not Cain's accepted? The Bible does not tell us just what was wrong in Cain's sacrifice, but we know that the trouble was in his spirit, it was the giver and not the gift that was displeasing to God. In our lesson for to-day, what two brothers offer worship to God? Whose sons are they? What office do they hold? They have, then, no excuse for not knowing just how they should worship God. The trouble with their incense offering is both in the gift itself,—they took strange fire (what that was the Bible does not tell us), and in the givers also, for they knowingly offered that which the Lord commanded them not.

For Older Pupils. When the city of Jericho was captured by Joshua the command was that all the silver and gold and vessels of brass and iron therein should be consecrated to the Lord and come into the treasury. But Achan disobeyed. "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment," he confessed, "and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent." "The Lord shall trouble thee this day," was Joshua's verdict, and they stoned him with stones and burned him with fire. "So the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger."

Somewhat similar is the lesson taught by the cupidity and death of Ananias and Sapphira. "And great fear came upon the church, and upon as many as heard these things." These examples teach the lesson which the death of Nadab and Abihu teaches, that God is "a consuming fire," who will not sanction any deviation from His express commands, any violation of His holiness and majesty.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I After Exaltation, what?

After Consecration, Disobedience. "And Moses and Aaron blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on

their faces." These are the concluding words of the preceding chapter. Israel had just ratified its covenant with Jehovah. Aaron and his sons had just been consecrated to their office as priests. How suddenly a bright sky may become overcast and lowering!

Nadab and Abihu, on the very day on which their consecration to the priesthood was solemnly ended, when as yet the echoes of the people's glad shouting had scarcely had time to die away, wilfully offer in the sanctuary "strange fire which the Lord commanded them not." Wordsworth suggests that "Perhaps they were exalted above measure through the abundance of their revelations, and were tempted to imagine that they were not bound by ordinary rules in the discharge of the duties of the Priest's office."

When the Tempter comes.

Not alone in pain and gloom
Does the abhorrèd tempter come;
Not in light alone and pleasure
Proffers he the poisoned measure,
When the soul doth rise
Nearest to its native skies,
There the exalted spirit finds,
Borne upon the heavenly winds,
Satan, in an angel's guise,
With voice divine and innocent eyes.

Richard Watson Gilder.

Christ's Example. Only three days after the Israelites had sung their triumphal song after the crossing of the Red Sea and the escape from the Egyptians, they are found murmuring beside the bitter well of Marah. We saw them again thrilled with awe, listening to the word of God at the fiery Mount, and vowing obedience to all His commands, and then setting up the golden calf and worshiping it as though they had never heard His commandments at all. We have moments when it seems as though we would never forget our vows, our uplifting visions of what we were meant to be and to do, but then there come moments when to our discouraged vision all life seems but a dreary round of duties, all efforts for the larger life useless, all hope vain. What is the remedy?

Had ever any one greater right to be discouraged than did Christ? Did His courage ever once fail? Did His success ever seem great? And yet He said, "I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

When Christ came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, where He had been conversing with Moses and Elias till His face shone, He did not go off in abstracted vision, but took up at once His mission of service, and freed the poor demonized child at the foot of the mountain.

How to maintain Power. What a fine thing it might seem to be, if our spiritual high pressure could be maintained automatically, like the air-brake pumps on the trolley-cars, which one hears busily and unfailingly chugging away the instant the dial shows that the pressure has fallen below a certain point! It is easy to keep the spiritual standard high when we "feel" like it. It is terribly hard to do so when that feeling has passed. But "Christ which strengtheneth me" is not intermittent in His power or love; and He alone can help us to rout even our willingness to be untrue to Him. *Sunday School Times.*

After the Revival — what? The evangelist has come and gone, the singer has departed, the toilers have ceased, the mighty meetings have closed, the harvest is ended, and the church is facing grave problems, serious questions, and weighty responsibilities. During the revival believers have have been lifted to a higher plane of Christian experience. Backsliders have been reclaimed, and prodigals have returned home. All have been on the mountain-tops of God's glory, temptations were not so many nor so fierce; sin lost much of its charm; trials did not vex nor trouble. But when we came down from that glorious summit to the plains of every-day life, with its routine of daily tasks and toils, we had far different experiences.

The apostle gives in Acts 2.42 a description of the early church in Jerusalem, and how it did its work of building up those that had been saved. They continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. . . . There should be labor not only to save souls, but labor to build them up into strong men and women for Christ, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith. *F. W. Imboden.*

After Decision Day. The sower went forth to sow the seed. He knew that the seed was good, and sowed faithfully with ever a thought to the harvest he was to present to the Lord of the harvest. The day came when the reaper put in the sickle. Golden sheaves were gathered with rejoicings. But there they lay in the field, mildewed with the rains, rotted with the burning sun, trampled under feet, while the so-called "reaper" went around publishing the number of bushels to the acre which had been cut. Whom did that harvest benefit? *Mrs. M. G. Kennedy,* in *Sunday School Times.*

II The Anointing Oil of the Lord is upon You

Privilege brings Responsibility. Nadab and Abihu had been wondrously privileged. They had gone with Moses and the elders up Mount Sinai, and they had beheld the glory of God. (Ex. 1.9, 10.) They had been consecrated to the priesthood. (Ex. 28 and Lev. 8), and the anointing oil of the Lord was still upon them when they disobeyed His instructions. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me." The greater their privileges, the nearer they were to God in His worship, the greater their responsibilities, the graver their sin.

"The name of your country is upon you; dishonor it not," says Doctor Joseph Parker. "The holy vow is upon you. You said you would be better and do better. Remember that vow. You are the head of a family: if you go wrong, the whole family will suffer to the third and fourth generation. The anointing oil is upon you in some form or in some way. The name of Christ is upon us all. We can not get rid of it. In this way or in that we have all to do with the Christ, with His name, His honor, His cross, His crown. The anointing oil of the Lord is upon you, and when the Christian professor speaks the base word, does the base deed, bends at the forbidden altar, withholds the sacrifice, forbears to speak the word of faithful testimony and allegiance,— the enemy laughs, and says: "Art thou also become as one of us?"

The Bonded Life. Our government requires revenues or duties to be paid on certain articles; until such duties are paid the articles themselves are bonded — pledged as securities for the revenues. The government demand is ever on them until the revenues are realized. In this sense count yourselves under bond. . . . You are favored by sufficient mental endowment to learn;

by having parents who approve your mental training; by living in a state and a community that is willing to pay a large sum to start you on the scholar's path; by being exempt from that poverty which must make the next meal the only thought. You are favored to be our bonded men and women, who are ever to yield revenues to all the worthy human interests, favored because you had some better training than others to fit nobly into the rank and file of the world's workers. The high calling of service is upon you. *Reuben H. Hartley.*

I hold it the duty of one who is gifted,
And royally dowered in all men's sight,
To know no rest 'till his life is lifted
Fully up to his great gifts' height.

He must mould the man into rare completeness,
For gems are set only in gold refined;
He must fashion his thoughts into perfect sweetness,
And cast out folly and pride from his mind.

For he who drinks from a god's gold chalice
Of art, or music, or rhythmic song,
Must sift from his soul the chaff of malice,
And weed from his heart the roots of wrong.

For I think the wrath of an outraged Heaven
Should fall on the chosen and dowered soul
That allows a lump of selfish leaven
By slow fermenting, to spoil the whole.

Great gifts should be borne like a crown befitting,
And not like gems on a beggar's hand;
And the toil must be constant and unremitting
That lifts up the king to the crown's demands. *Morris.*

What do Ye more than Others? Why should I do more than others? Because the Christian must meet the requirements of his position. We assume a high standard as Christ's followers, and the world rightly asks large things from us.

"I have been a soldier five years." What things military can you do more than others?

"I was at college six years." Very good; what mental equipment have you more then others?

"I have traveled over three continents." You are to be congratulated; what have you seen more than others?

"I have been a Christian so many years." Thank God; but what do you more than others?

The soldier must demonstrate his claims to service; the student must prove his possession of learning; the traveler must reveal his knowledge of strange lands, or we scoff at their claims, and bid them cease their presumptuous clatter. When asked for demonstration of our faith in Christ, if we can not meet the challenge, our assumption of the Christian name is hypocrisy. *Epworth Herald*

III WINE IS A MOCKER, STRONG DRINK IS RAGING; AND WHOSOEVER IS DECEIVED THEREBY IS NOT WISE

Wine is a Mocker. A mocker promises something which he can not give. Wine or strong drink may have seemed to promise exhilaration to the priests who served in the tabernacle, but the warning given in verses 9–11 of our lesson teaches that instead it perverts the judgment so that they would not know the difference between clean and unclean things in the services and would become unfit teachers of others.

A number of eagles have had their nests near the shores of Chautauqua Lake. One day an interested observer saw an eagle suddenly dart down to the water and then mount upward, and in its talons there was a huge muscallonge weighing about ten pounds. Upward the bird with its prey soared to a height of about a thousand feet and then it was seen to be sinking slowly. Gaining momentum in its downward flight, it fell with a splash into the lake. Later the bird and fish were found together dead. The fish had proved too heavy for the bird to carry, but its claws had been so firmly imbedded in its flesh that it could not let go, and thus it had been pulled downward to its death. Strong drink is raging and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. He may think he is strong enough to carry the heavy weight, but when he finds he must let go or sink with it to a shameful death, he will find that he can not let go.

What Strong Drink Does. The continuance of intemperance means the continuation of poverty, of dissatisfaction, of unrest, and of strife. A fitting motto to place over the door of every saloon and brewery and distillery in the world would be this: The poor ye have always with you.

The statistics given in regard to the extent of the drink habit and its enormous cost are startling to every thoughtful reader, but they are very inadequate to express the real magnitude of the evil. As well attempt to express the cost of a great explosion by the value of the dynamite used in the bomb, as to express the cost of intemperance by the value of liquor consumed by our people. Every dollar of the nation's drink bill represents many dollars of expense that can only be hinted at, but can never be computed or expressed by figures. It represents production hampered by intoxication. It represents wages lost by idleness. It represents life destroyed and property squandered, disease and crime increased.

The cost of our asylums, almshouses and jails is enormous. Look at our army of seventy thousand criminals in the prisons of our land, involving an expense of one hundred and twenty-five millions of dollars a year, and a total loss to the country of more than six hundred million paupers, and thirty-five thousand tramps, eighty per cent. of whom, with an equal proportion of the criminals, have been brought to their present condition through intemperance. Of the nearly one hundred and seventy thousand insane persons in our asylums, four teen per cent. are the immediate victims of strong drink. Let us remember the fact that there are about two hundred and ten thousand men employed in the various departments of the liquor traffic, its manufacture or sale. Adding these forces together, we have an army of more than four hundred thousand men withdrawn, by the influence of intemperance, from useful and productive labor to spend energy in doing what is injurious to mankind. *G. H. Hubbard.*

Men who have made the training and development of the human body their study, and who have money and reputation at stake on the condition of those whom they train, insist on a pure and abstemious life for those whom they are

aiding to "strive for the mastery" in a coming contest. The captain of a Yale boat crew met one of his oarsmen on the street while they were training for a race. "Joe," he said, "you've got a quid of tobacco in your mouth. That won't do. Spit it out. You can't chew tobacco and row in this race. We can't afford to have you." That captain did not speak as a Puritan, but as an athlete. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Shoes and Rations.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Opportunity with ability makes responsibility. *Bishop Hunt.*

What have you done to-day that nobody but a Christian would do? *Babcock.*

Until reason be ripe, examples direct more than precepts. *Quarles.*

A Christian is the world's Bible: in many cases a revised version is needed. *D. L. Moody.*

The moral life of man is like the flight of a bird in the air; he is sustained only by effort, and when he ceases to exert himself he falls. *Anthony Froude.*

All the doors that lead inward to the secret place of the Most High are doors outward — out of self, out of smallness, out of wrong. *George Macdonald.*

This makes the sacredness and awfulness of life when we come to know it, that we are never so near our highest as when we are most sensible of the danger of our lowest, and the danger of the lowest is never so real to us as when the splendor of the highest stands wide open. *Phillips Brooks.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence of all them that are about him. Psa. 89.7.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition. 1 Cor. 10.11.

Unto whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required. Luke 12.48.

Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice. 1 Sam 15.22.

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it. Psa. 39.9.

Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead. Matt 8.22.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Let us, like Christ, make every summit to which God lifts us a new platform for prayer, every victory we win a new consecration and enlistment of our faculties and our feelings in His service. *George Adam Smith.*

THE LESSON STORY

For seven days Moses had officiated at the consecration of the tent of meeting and its furniture (Ex. 29.35), and of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. Then Aaron, assisted by his sons Nadab and Abihu, prepared the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offering. A miraculous fire consumed the burnt offering and with shouts of praise the people fell on their faces before the tabernacle.

This same fire shortly afterwards fell in signal judgment on Aaron's two

sons. Nadab and Abihu took their censers and offered "strange fire which the Lord commanded not," and the fire from the altar consumed them. Moses forbade Aaron to show any signs of mourning or to leave his official duties, "for the anointing oil of the Lord was upon him." And Aaron held his peace. Two kinsmen were bidden to carry the young men without the camp for burial and the people were told to "bewail the burying" but recognize that the Lord had kindled it. This dreadful punishment was necessary at this time to vindicate before the people the sacredness of God and to teach the duty of reverential care in fulfilling His ordinances. Just as owners of "sprout lands" carefully fence round the young trees that cattle may not get in and destroy them, but when the soft maples and elms have attained their growth no pains is taken to maintain the fence-guard; so because these were the early days of the Israelitish people it was necessary carefully to safeguard the ritual laws and suffer no act to go unpunished which trifled with the holiness and majesty of God.

The chapter concludes with directions to Aaron as priest. He must not drink wine nor strong drink while officiating at the services of the sanctuary, lest he be made unable to distinguish between things clean and unclean, and become unfit to teach others the statutes of the Lord. Directions were given to him and his remaining sons as to the eating of the meat offerings.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Religious responsibility is proportioned to religious privilege.

2. In acquaintance with the people of other countries it has been my fortune to rejoice that I was an American, nurtured in her institutions, political and moral. We ought to expect more of ourselves as a nation than any other. The goodness of God has been so manifested to us. Our Anglo-Saxon blood, our Protestant faith should bespeak in us as a people the best, the finest, the most spiritual life attained by any nation. Do we fulfill it? *G. D. Pentecost.*

3. It takes society a long time to learn that you can not have the saloon primary without the jail high school. *Ram's Horn.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the summary of the "set feasts" in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus. 2. In the ceremony of cleansing a house from leprosy, (Lev. 14.49-53), what atonement made for the house resembles somewhat the atonement made by the scapegoat? 3. Write in order the events of the Day of Atonement. 4. Read the description of the Man of Sorrows in Isa. 53, the complement of this scene of the Day of Atonement. 5. Contrast the work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement with the atoning power of Christ. See the ninth chapter of Hebrews.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Although several chapters of laws and ordinances intervene in Leviticus between the two lessons, historically the one immediately follows the other. Probably the time was short which elapsed between the death of Aaron's sons and the command for the observance of the Day of Atonement.

LESSON VII — AUGUST 18

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Lev. 16.5–22. (Read Lev. 16, 17; Heb. 9.) Commit v. 2.

Golden Text

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. Heb. 7.25.

LESSON TEXT Leviticus 16.5–22

5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him *for* a sin offering.

10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which *is* for himself:

12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the vail:

13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not:

14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy *place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

18 And he shall go out unto the altar that *is* before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about.

19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy *place*, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and

confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

5. *Two kids of the goats.* R. V., *two he-goats.*

6. *Offer.* R. V., *present.* He placed the victims before the entrance to the tabernacle. *His bullock.* See verse 3. *His house.* All the priests. According to Jewish tradition this offering was accompanied by the high priest's making a solemn confession of sin. *Gardiner.*

7. *Present them.* R. V., *set them.*

8. *The scapegoat.* R. V., *Azazel.* The word only occurs here in the Old Testament. Some say the word means the goat itself, which was so called from the fact of its being sent away free, hence the English phrase, scapegoat (escapegoat). Others regard it as an abstract noun, and interpret, "For complete sending away or removal." The sins of the people being confessed by the priest over the head of the goat, and thus transferred or imputed to it, the goat was then sent away to the uninhabited desert. The rite thus symbolized the complete removal of sin and guilt. *Porter.* The Jews mostly interpret it as the name of a steep rock in the wilderness; but the marked antithesis in which the word stands to "the Lord" is strongly in favor of the view that some personal opinion is denoted by it; and it is now almost universally regarded as the name of an evil spirit, popularly supposed to have its dwelling in the desert. *Driver.*

9. *Bring.* R. V., *present.* The details concerning the sacrificing of the sin offering for the people are given in verses 15, 16, 20–22. The goat was not sacrificed till after Aaron's bullock had been sacrificed, as directed in 11–14.

10. R. V., But the goat, on which the lot fell for Azazel, shall be set alive before Jehovah, to make atonement for (or, over) him, to send him away for Azazel into the wilderness. *To make atonement for him* is very difficult and uncertain. Most probably it means that, as the altars of burnt-offering and incense were prepared for their sacred use by a rite of expiation (Ex. 29.36), so the goat was here similarly consecrated for the solemn purpose which it had to conserve. *Driver.*

12. *The altar before the Lord.* The altar of burnt-offering on which a fire was always kept burning.

14. *Seven times.* The number seven denotes perfection; and the lesson it symbolizes is the perfect and complete discharge of the duties which God enjoins. *Clarke.*

16. *In all their sins.* R. V., *even all their sins. That remaineth among them.* R. V., *that dwelleth with them.*

17. *There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation.* Because all were regarded as unclean until after the atonement.

18. *Go out.* Out of the tabernacle to the brazen altar in the court.

20. *Reconciling the holy place.* R. V., *atoning for the holy place. Bring.* R. V., *present.*

21. *In all their sins.* R. V., *even all their sins.* Iniquities, transgressions, sins, three terms supposed by the Jews to comprise everything that implies a

breach of the divine law, or an offense against God. *Clark.* *A fit man.* R. V. *a man that is in readiness.* Tradition says that the man was appointed for this work the year before.

22. *A land not inhabited.* R. V., *a solitary land.* Literally, a land cut off; *i. e.* either a region remote from men, or one whence the animal might not be able to find its way back. *Driver.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

8. The symbolism of the rite may be explained as follows: By the goat upon which the lot fell to be Jehovah's (which was offered in the ordinary way as a sin-offering, though with the special feature of the application of the blood to the mercy-seat) atonement was made for the sins of the nation. But upon this solemn occasion it was not sufficient for the sins of the people to be

The Seven-branched Candlestick and the Table of Shew Bread Carried in Triumphal Procession after the Capture of Jerusalem. From a Marble Relief on the Arch of Titus in Rome

sacrificially expiated, they must, by a visible figure, be banished from the nation's midst. For this purpose the sins (already symbolically) cancelled and forgiven by the sacrifice of the first goat, are laid symbolically by confession upon the second goat, which is then dismissed into the wilderness *for Azazel.* Probably it is meant as a symbolical declaration that the land and people are now purged from guilt; their sins being handed over to the evil spirit to whom they are held to belong, and whose home is in the desolate wilderness, remote from human habitations. *S. R. Driver.*

13, 14. As burning incense was a symbol of prayer, this covering of the mercy-seat with the cloud of incense was a symbolical covering of the glory of the Most Holy One with prayer to God, in order that He might not see the sin, nor suffer His holy wrath to break forth upon the sinner, but might graciously accept, in the blood of the sin-offering, the souls for which it was presented. *Franz Delitzsch.*

21. *Shall confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel.* The

words used in later times on this occasion were, according to the Mishna: — "O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed, they have rebelled, they have sinned before Thee. I beseech Thee now absolve their transgressions, their rebellion and their sin that they have sinned against Thee, as it is written in the law of Moses Thy servant, that on this day he shall make atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins, and ye shall be clean."

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

8. *Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats.* The Jews inform us that there were two lots made either of wood, stone, or any kind of metal. On one was written *Lashshem,* For the Name, *i. e.* Jehovah, which the Jews will neither write nor pronounce; on the other was written *Laazazel,* For the scapegoat: then they put the two lots into a vessel. The priest came, and the goats stood before him, one on the right hand and the other on the left; the vessel was shaken, and the priest put in both his hands and brought out a lot in each: that which was in his right hand was laid on the goat that was on his right hand, and that in his left hand was laid on the goat that was on his left hand; and according to what was written on the lots, the scapegoat and the goat for sacrifice were ascertained. *Adam Clarke.*

The rabbis say that, when the lot used to be taken for the scapegoat, a scarlet fillet was bound on the scapegoat's head, and after the high priest had confessed the sins of himself and the people over the scapegoat's head the scarlet fetter became white; but that about forty years before Jerusalem fell this miracle ceased. A remarkable admission of adversaries, when it is remembered that this would make the cessation of the miracle coincide with the date of the crucifixion! It is also notable that the word *scarlet* means *double dyed,* as meant to convey the deep-seated, deep-fixed, and ineradicable stain of guilt that no tears nor human penance nor self-cleansing can wash away. *Arthur T. Pierson.*

10. *Let him go for a scapegoat.* When a person is sick he vows on his recovery to set a goat at liberty, in honor of his deity. Having selected a suitable one from his flocks, he makes a slit in the ear, or ties a yellow string round its neck, and lets it go whithersoever it pleases. Whoever sees the animal knows it to be a *Nate-Kadi,* the vowed goat, and no person will molest it. When a person has committed what he considers a great sin, he does the same thing; but in addition to other ceremonies, he sprinkles the animal with water, puts his hands upon it, and prays to be forgiven. *Roberts.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Sinai, paragraph 67. Rephidim, paragraphs 64–66.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. There was one day in the calendar of the Israelites so solemn and important that in later times they called it simply "The Day." Philo, a learned Jew who wrote shortly after the time of Christ, called it the "Feast of Fasting." What is a fast day? Philo must have called it a "feast" in the sense of its being a set, solemn occasion. All the people fasted twenty-

four hours. For an entire week before this day, the high priest had very little food. The night before he spent in reading and explaining the Scriptures. When the day dawned he put aside the ornaments and gorgeous high priestly dress, and was clad only in linen garments, clean and white, for he was to enter the most sacred place in the tabernacle and make atonement for sin. If we divide this word atonement into three syllables, at-one-ment, we see better what it means. The people were to be made "at one" with God. If you have done some one a wrong, you do not feel "at one" with him until you have confessed your fault and been forgiven. This is what the high priest did for the people, to make them "at one" with God.

Our lesson describes the services of the first day of Atonement, observed by Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel in the wilderness.

For Older Pupils. On the tenth day of the seventh month was celebrated the Day of Atonement, the culmination of all the Mosaic sacrificial legislation, a day on which the people as a nation laid aside all work and "afflicted their souls," fasting from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth day, the only day in all the year that the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, "not without blood," to make an especial expiation for his own sins and those of the people. The ritual was peculiarly impressive. The high priest in his mediatorial office, appearing in the presence of Jehovah for the entire people, prefigured, in all that he did, the great work of redemption which Christ was ordained to do in "the fulness of time." As Doctor Davidson has said, his very robes, clean and white, taught men's minds that only perfect purity can come before God — the man whose hands are clean and whose heart is pure; but as no man then came up to that ideal, the thought and the hope was awakened of One who should attain to it, or of a time when all should reach it.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Scapegoats

Putting the Blame on Others. The goat on which the sins of the people were symbolically laid by Aaron's putting his hands upon its head, was sent away into the wilderness. This meant that the sins were put away for ever, and were not to be remembered against those who committed them. Just as the Israelites had their scapegoat to bear their sins, so we have our scapegoat in some persons or thing on which we put the blame for our misdeeds. It is said that a school-boy never tumbles on the ice without stopping at once to rebuckle the straps of his skates, for of course it was the loose strap that caused him to stumble!

In a New York paper an English sparrow's attempt to build a home on Benjamin Franklin's statue at Park Row is described. He tried to fasten a bit of rag between Franklin's wig and left ear, but it slipped away from the smooth metal. He darted after the rag and shoved it back again; again it slipped. Several other English sparrows gathered on the shoulders of the statue and "began to guy him," says the interested spectator. He paid no attention to them, but by actual count made his attempt fifteen times. Then his temper exploded. He went at the other birds with the energy of a cyclone, and in three minutes had whipped them all. Then he seated himself on Franklin's head and smoothed his ruffled feathers, apparently well-satisfied with himself.

Is not this sparrow a picture of some one whom you know? He is baffled in his attempts to do something, and because he can not succeed, some one else must suffer for it.

"Do we ever stop to consider
When everything seems to go wrong,
That the fault we think is another's
Has been our own all the day long?"

Our Own Accountability. There are two words which ought never to be heard by children—"luck" and "chance"; the two verbal scapegoats on which are laid half the sins and follies of the race. If there is anything which is essential to the moral health and strength of a boy or girl, it is to plant deep in the consciousness the fact that this is an ordered world; that a man reaps that which he sows; that he secures the rewards for which he is willing to make the effort, and gains the prizes for which he is willing to pay the price in labor, self-denial, and struggle. *Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

An excuse for sin is a statement of the circumstances under which a man did wrong. When we say, "I could not help it; circumstances were too much for me," do our hearts believe it to be true? We say, "My temperament, my hidden appetite, business exigencies, irresistible pressure," as though we were compelled to do wrong. The first man in the long line of apologetic succession said, "The woman tempted me," but did not say, "and made me eat." Whatever he might wish implied, he could only say, "and I did eat." No unconsenting soul can be made to sin, and so sin is inexcusable. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

II The Meaning of the Day of Atonement

A Symbolical Rite. It is similar to what we observe in the Lord's Supper, a rite setting forth something that is too great for language. The people of Israel did not receive a victim from God to be punished instead of them; the animal they slew they gave to God. It was as though by this symbol they offered themselves; they attached no significance to the offering of the animal, beyond what it reminded them of. It is as though they were saying: This is Israel, this is our blood that we are shedding, so Israel in its conflict with sin, in its struggle for righteousness, which is the service of God, is shedding blood of the soul. The nation was at one in this sacrifice; this was a collective act: the high priest acted for all the people, and it was not the death of the animal that made any difference whatever; it was the attitude of the people towards the great fact whether they were serving sin or serving righteousness. Just as the animal poured out his blood, so they were to resist unto blood, striving against sin. *Reginald J. Campbell,* in *The Song of Ages.*

The Atonement Inadequate. It was an expression of the inherent insufficiency of the various sacrifices of the past year; and acknowledgment that, notwithstanding all those propitiations, there still remained an alienation between a sinful people and a perfectly holy God. It was the design of this day to acknowledge this, and by the most solemn types, symbolically to remove it; yet in the provision for its annual repetition, its insufficiency to this end stands confessed, and with especial clearness it points forward to the only true remedy in Him who should really obtain the victory over the power of evil. *Gardiner.*

Its Meaning for Us. There was but very little significance attached to the victim's death; slaughter was simply the means employed for obtaining the

blood, which was sacred as the seat of life (Gen. 9.4; Lev. 17.11), and it is important to observe that in the transaction which followed the slaughter — in the presentations and sprinkling of the blood — the dominant idea was rather that of the surrender of life than that of the acceptance of death. The blood was, in fact, regarded as still living; it was only liberated for higher purposes by the act of slaughter. . . . The blood thus offered was an emblem of life yielded up in perfect self-surrender, and dedicated to the service of the living God. The act of sprinkling on the horns of the altar or on the mercy-seat typified the reception of human life into the sphere of divine fellowship. . . .

The analogy of the Gospels illustrates the mode in which a Christian student may use the Old Testament types. Speaking generally, each Gospel gives a separate view of Christ's person, just as each parable in St. Matthew, thirteenth chapter, presents some different aspect of the divine kingdom. So it is with the Old Testament sacrifices. When Faustus the Manichæan complains that they are no better than a system of idol-worship in which the Church, by accepting the Old Testament, becomes a participator, Augustine replies by explaining their real significance for Christians. They do not, he says, form part of our practice, yet we welcome them among the mysteries of Holy Scripture as aiding us to understand the things which they prefigured. "Even these," he continues, "were our examples," and all such ordinances in many and varied fashions foreshadowed that One Sacrifice whereof we now celebrate the memorial. *Robert Lawrence Ottley,* in *Aspects of the Old Testament.*

III Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him

Why not Forgiveness without Sacrifice? Why is not forgiveness without sacrifice more worthy of God, and more credible in view of the alleged character of God, than forgiveness conditioned on sacrifice, and on the Sacrifice of One who is innocent? In the calm holy light of Bible truth, where stand revealed those three inseparable ideas: God the Loving, desiring the best for man; God the Righteous, condemning by the moral necessity of His Being, sin as an intolerable element in the universe; God the Sacrifice, enduring in Himself, by obedience unto death, that necessary condemnation of sin on behalf of a beloved race,— in the light of this truth we begin to read an answer to this great question. It is because of that moral necessity in the Nature of God which calls for the condemnation of sin. But how is condemnation to be expressed? In two ways only is it expressible to man on the part of God, through precept and through penalty. When the first fails there remains only the second. . . .

How, in what sense, does the sacrifice of Christ atone for sin? Thus: The Holy Sacrifice of the God-Man meets, on behalf of a beloved but sinful race, that necessary moral demand in the Nature of God the Righteous for the judgment and condemnation of sin. "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the requirement of the law (*i. e.* the moral necessity which exists in God's nature, that sin shall be condemned before it is forgiven) might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Here is the heart of the Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice. A moral necessity in the Nature of God requires Sin's condemnation. The proclaiming of that condemnation in precept failed. It failed through the inalienable freedom of

man. There remained only penalty. Sin must be condemned unto death before it can be forgiven. The judgment of God is that they who commit such things are worthy of death, and the tender love God has for us and for our salvation, met, through Christ, that moral necessity in the nature of God's righteousness which compels that sin be condemned unto death ere it can be forgiven. The Divine Sacrifice, the Death of Christ, is God's way of love to meet the moral demand of His own Being. The Death of Christ is God's condemnation of sin.

And now no obstacle remains in the path of God's forgiveness of sins but one — the will of each individual man. Will the individual person identify himself with Christ in His Death by believing on Him as the Divine Sacrifice for sins? Will he begin to do this by the act of faith, *i. e.* by voluntarily uniting himself to Christ in His obedience to the condemnation of sin, and by rising with Him into newness of life, henceforth to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit? Or will he turn away from the Christ hard in heart, proud in spirit, trusting in his own righteousness, venturing to believe that God will deny His Nature by forgiving sin without the solemn consent of the human will, in the act of faith, to the condemnation of sin by the Death of Christ? Salvation appears to depend on this decision. Christ is our Shelter from the condemnation of sin. Disbelieving Him, we invite the penalty of sin upon ourselves. *Charles Cuthbert Hall,* in *The Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice.*

I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise. *Browning.*

The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. The poor queen in the play, her heart black with the murder of good King Duncan, and her hand red with his blood, moans in her sleep that "all the waters of the ocean could not wash that little hand." And they could not; the miserable dreamer was right about that. The stain was too deep to be affected by any such cleansing. But thousands of poor creatures equally guilty and miserable have learned that, if the ocean could not wash them clean from their stains of guilt, God could. Even the old prophets caught glimpses of this omnipotence of God's pardon: "there is a fountain opened in Jerusalem for all uncleanness." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But you and I have seen it more clearly we have known it more certainly ever since God's chosen Son, Jesus Christ died on the cross for sinners. *William R. Richards.*

Vital Truths. At twenty I believed several hundred things; at fifty I believed about a score, but now, with clearer vision, as I grow older and come nearer the close of the journey, I hold only to three things as vital — that God our Father loves us far better than we know, that Jesus Christ, His Son, is our Redeemer and Saviour, and that I am a sinner, enriched by His grace, though all unworthy. *Talmage.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you. *Baxter.*

A grimy hand may do a gracious deed, but a bad heart can not. *Babcock.*

By all that He requires of me
I know what God Himself must be. *Whittier.*

Christianity derives its name from Christ, its meaning from the Cross; reduced to its simplest terms, Christianity gives Jesus Christ and Him crucified. *Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

My heart's desire has ever been to make known to men that there is no salvation but by blood, and not by blood only, but by the particular blood named in the text — even the precious blood of Christ. *Joseph Parker.*

Few, perhaps, would reject the Atonement except for that which goes with the Atonement, the call that we shall be conformed unto Christ's death by dying to sin in our own hearts and lives. *Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. Heb. 9.22.

The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isa. 53.6.

There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4.12.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. Heb. 2.9.

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? Heb. 10.28, 29.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Doctor Arnold of Rugby would not permit his boys to say, "Christ died for us," but instead he taught them to say, "Christ died for me." Do you take the promises, as well as the commands of the Bible, as God's messages to you individually? Do you know that your sins are atoned for by the shedding of Christ's blood?

THE LESSON STORY

After the death of his two sons, Aaron was warned that he must enter the most holy place only after offering special sacrifices for himself and for the people. His offering was a young bullock. The people's offerings were two goats which were presented before the door of the tabernacle, and by the casting of lots Aaron decided which one should be offered to the Lord in sacrifice and which should be destined "for Azazel."

Arrayed in "holy garments" of linen, Aaron first slew his young bullock in the court. Next he entered the most holy place bearing a golden censer full of coals from the altar, on which he put sweet incense, so that the cloud of incense covered the mercy seat above the ark. A second time he entered with the blood of the sin offering for himself and the priests, sprinkled it first upon the front side of the mercy-seat and then seven times before it. Now followed the atonement for the people. Having slain the goat in the court, Aaron entered the most holy place a third time, and there sprinkled

its blood as before he had sprinkled the blood of the bullock, thus making atonement in behalf of the people as he had first done in behalf of himself and the priests. After this was completed he went back into the holy place, and, mingling the blood of the bullock with that of the goat, made an atonement there for all. Then, going out to the brazen altar of burnt offerings, he sprinkled the horns of the altar and then the altar itself seven times.

The ceremony followed of putting his hands on the head of the live goat and confessing over it all their sins, which then, symbolically laden with the sins, was led out into the wilderness.

Aaron then bathed and resumed his customary priestly garments before offering the burnt offerings. Thus on this Day of Atonement, the high priest "cleansed the people from all sin before the Lord."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The danger of accepting the forms of Christianity without realizing its essence. Our time is a crowded, pushing, keen-witted time; there are many gospels, — gospels of ambition, gospels of selfishness, gospels of progress, gospels of worldly and churchly pride. It is a time of all times to consider the Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice. Those who are trained to think for themselves, not to do their thinking by proxy, are also tempted to think too little about Jesus Christ and Him crucified. *Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

2. There is, perhaps, no truth in the New Testament which does not lie in germ in the Old; and conversely, there are, perhaps, no truths in the Old Testament which have not been expanded and had new meaning put into them in the New. The Old Testament contains the same truth as the New, but in a less developed form, and we must avoid two errors which are not uncommon. The one is the mistake of separating the Old Testament from the New in such a way as leaves us with no authoritative truth in the Old. The other is to confuse the New and the Old so that we shall find the Old equally advanced with the New. The difference between the New and the Old is not that the same truths are not found in both, but that in the one the truths are found in a less degree of development than in the other. *A. B. Davidson* in *The Theology of the Old Testament.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What sort of region did the Israelites enter after leaving Sinai? (See Deut. 1.19.) 2. In Num. 4.5–15 read about the preparation of the tabernacle and its contents for a journey. 3. When did we first hear about Jethro and his family? (Ex. 2.15–3.1.) 4. Narrate the visit of Jethro to Moses at Mount Sinai. (Ex. 18.5.) Did Hobab probably go with Moses? (See Judges 1.16; 4.11; 1 Sam. 15.6.) 6. What was God's promise as recorded in Ex. 33.14? 7. With verse 35 compare Psa. 68.1.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The remainder of the book of Leviticus is filled with laws and regulations. The first chapters of Numbers recount the numbering of the people and the preparation made for their departure from Sinai.

ISRAEL JOURNEYING TO CANAAN

Num. 10.11–13, 29–36. (Read Num. 10.11–12, 16.) Commit vv. 35, 36.

Golden Text

And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light. Ex. 13.21.

LESSON TEXT Numbers 10.11–13, 29–36

11 And it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.

12 And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.

13 And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

29 And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.

30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.

32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33 And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

34 And the cloud of the Lord *was* upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

36 And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

11. *On the twentieth day of the second month.* They had been at Sinai nearly a year. (See Ex. 19.1.) The Samaritan Bible introduces at this place the words which we find in Deut. 1.6–8: "The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying: ye have dwelt long enough in this Mount, turn and take your journey." *Clarke.*

12. *Took their journeys.* R. V., *set forward according to their journeys. In the wilderness of Paran.* This was not the first station after leaving Sinai. The intermediate stations are given in Num. 33.

13. *They first.* The camp of Judah went first. The order is given in the omitted verses, 14–28.

29. *Raguel.* R. V., *Reuel. We are journeying unto the place.* Canaan.

30. *Mine own land.* Midian. See paragraph 59 of the chapter on geography.

31. *Be to us instead of eyes.* A proverbial expression still used. Hobab's knowledge of the region would be helpful in telling them where to obtain water, fuel, etc.

32. *What goodness.* R. V., *what good soever.* From Judges 1.16; 4.11; 1 Sam. 15.6, which show that his posterity dwelt in Canaan, it is supposed that Hobab yielded to Moses' request.

33. *The mount of the Lord.* Sinai.

36. *The many thousands.* R. V., *the ten thousands of the thousands.* The words which Moses was in the habit of uttering are given, not only as a proof of the joyous confidence of Moses, but as an encouragement to the congregation to cherish the same believing confidence. It is a prayer sure of its answer. *Delitzsch.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

29. *Come thou with us and we will do thee good.* Moses was right in saying that they would do him good. The outlook to a future was something which the Kenites as a people had not, never could have in their desultory life. Unprogressive, out of the way of the great movements of humanity, gaining nothing as generations went by, but simply reproducing the habits and treasuring the beliefs of their fathers, the Arab tribe might maintain itself, might occasionally strike for righteousness in some conflict, but otherwise had no prospect, could have no enthusiasm. They would live their hard life, they would enjoy freedom, they would die — such would be their history. Compared with that poor outlook, how good it would be to share the noble task of establishing on the soil of Canaan a nation devoted to truth and righteousness, in league with the living God, destined to extend His kingdom and make His faith the means of blessing to all.

This invitation Hobab set aside. "Nay," he said, "I will not go; but I will depart to my own land and to my kindred." The old ties of country and people were strong for him. The true Arab loves his country passionately. The desert is his home, the mountains are his friends. His hard life is a life of liberty. He is strongly attached to his tribe, which has its own traditions, its own glories. There have been feuds the memory of which must be cherished. The people of the clan are brothers and sisters. These influences Hobab felt, and this besides deterred him, that if he joined the Israelites he would be under the command of Moses. Hobab was prospective head of his own tribe, already in partial authority at least. To obey the word of command instead of giving it was something he could not brook.

Moses used another plea. Hobab did not respond to the promise of advantage to himself; he might be moved by the hope of being useful. Knowing that he had to deal with a man who was proud, and in his way magnanimous, Moses wisely used this appeal. And he used it frankly, without pretence. Accustomed to the desert, over which he had often traveled, acquainted with the best methods of disposing a camp in any given position, with the quick eye and habit of observation which the Arab life gives, Hobab would be the very adjutant to whom Moses might commit many details. *Robert A. Watson.*

The historian does not think it worth while to tell us whether Moses' at-

tempt to secure the help of a pair of sharp Bedouin eyes succeeded or failed, but passes on to describe at once how "The ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them to search out a resting-place for them," and how "The cloud was upon them when they went out of the camp." He puts the two things side by side, not calling on us to notice the juxtaposition, but surely expecting that we shall not miss what is so plain. He would teach us that it mattered little whether Israel had Hobab or not, if they had the ark and the cloud. Perhaps he meant us to ask ourselves whether it was not a wavering of faith in Moses to be so anxious to secure a human guide when he had a divine leader. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *The Secret of Power.*

29. *We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you.*

O let us hear the inspiring word
Which they of old at Horeb heard;
Breathe to our hearts the high command,
"Go onward and possess the land!"

Thou who art light, shine on each soul!
Thou who art truth, each mind control!
Open our eyes and make us see
The path which leads to Heaven and Thee. *John Hay.*

33. *The ark went before them.* We may sometimes envy those pilgrims of the desert who were only obliged to look out of their tents in order to learn whether to remain quiet or to go ahead; and if they were to move they knew just whither to bend their steps. But our God, if we ask Him, will be as truly with us in our life-journey as He was with the children of Israel. One important thing with the children of Israel was to keep their eyes on the movings or the restings of the cloud-pillar. They did not move it; the cloud moved them. A Christian who would be happy and successful in his spiritual life must be an open-eyed servant of his Master. He must be open-eyed to study the Lord's example. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

I have always had one lodestar. Now
As I look back, I see that I have wasted
Or progressed as I looked towards that star—
A need, a trust, a yearning after God,
I felt as one beloved, for I saw God everywhere. *Browning.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

31. *Leave us not, I pray thee.* Everybody at all acquainted with the nature of such deserts as Israel had to pass through, must be sensible of the great importance of having some of the natives of that country for guides: they know where water is to be found, and can lead to places proper, on that account, for encampments. Moses applied to Hobab the Midianite, *i. e.* to a principal Arab of the tribe of Midian. *Harmer.*

"You must have a skilled dragoman—a man familiar with the desert wants and the desert ways—to make intelligent provision for your necessities and to guide you on your course. And you must have protection as well as guidance. The most venturesome dragoman does not attempt to guide a party over the desert except under the guardianship of the local sheik

of the Arab tribe whose territory he traverses. At each new stretch of the desert you must have the protection and company of a new sheik."

31. *Be thou to us instead of eyes.* An aged father says to his son, "My son, leave me not in my old age; you are now my eyes." It is said of a good servant, "He is eyes to his master." *Roberts.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The wilderness of Paran, paragraph 56. Sinai to Kadesh, paragraphs 68–70.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. In what lesson did we first find the Israelites encamped before Mount Sinai? How many lessons have we had since then? What was the chief event of their long stay? What great sin did they commit there? What great day did they celebrate? The command has now come to break up their camp and move onward. The tabernacle and its contents must first be made ready for their journey. As had been carefully arranged beforehand, Aaron and his sons took down the veil between the holy place and the most holy place and covered the ark with it, over that they placed the covering of badgers' skins, and on top of all a blue cloth. In the sides of the ark they put the staves by which it was carried. For the table of shew bread and its utensils there was a blue cloth and a scarlet cloth and also one of badgers' skins. The candlestick, the golden altar of incense, the altar for burnt offerings, were each carefully covered by the high priest and his sons and made ready for those appointed to carry them. What was the signal for the breaking-up of camp?

For Older Pupils. We have now reached the moment in which the camp is called to move forward. All is duly ordered, according to that grand regulator, "The commandment of the Lord." Each man according to his pedigree, and each tribe according to the standard thereof, is in the divinely appointed place. The Levites are at their post, each with his own clearly defined work to do. Full provision is made for the cleansing of the camp from every species of defilement. We have the pillar of fire and the cloud; and, finally, the double testimony of the silver trumpet. In short, nothing is lacking to the pilgrim host; every detail has been carefully arranged. *G. H. Mackintosh.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Be thou to us instead of Eyes

What could Moses want with Hobab's Eyes? Did not he have his own eyes? And was he not ever sure of God's guiding care? On an old map the direction of the prevailing winds is shown by a picture of a sail-boat, and suspended above it is a small hand-bellows blowing on the sails in such a way as to drive it forward. Does not that hand-bellows represent what a great many people crave, some human hand to guide their life's course?

When a well-known Protestant clergyman a few years ago left his denomination and united with the Catholics, the *Independent* expressed for him

the wish that all the surcease of sorrow might be his "which comes from putting one's thinking machinery under the mastership of an infallible authority." There are many in the Catholic Church for this very reason, they wish to escape the necessity of solving perplexing questions for themselves, to avoid all moral effort by following implicitly ecclesiastical authority. "It is pleasant to lie back on the cushions and let another drive — but if you suspect he can not drive?" writes Robert Browning in one of his letters. There is only One Infallible Guide.

Do it Yourself. The problem is hard, you give it up and ask an older sister to work it out for you. The grammar lesson is tiresome, you copy the exercise which your classmate has written instead of writing your own. You make it a habit not to do for yourself anything you can get some one else to do for you, and what will be the result? You will become one of that very large class of inefficient people, who must always be led by others. There are vast deposits of coal on the island of Cuba, but the Cuban railroads have been sending to our country for all their coal, merely because the administration there has been so inefficient that their coal lies unmined. What resources there may be in yourself you can never tell until you resolutely begin to find out by doing what your natural inclination leads you to get some one to do for you. Every success you gain will increase your ability to gain others. Emerson used to say that "We are born on a stairs, and must either climb or go down." You must do your own climbing if you would not do your own falling.

A Leader or a Trailer? A disinterested observer of the world will note the singular fact that a small remnant of mankind carries all the rest on its shoulders. For every man of influence, of power to help, there are nine (perhaps ninety-nine would be nearer the mark) to lean on him. The brain work he does affords capital which hundreds who do not use their brains live upon. His moral character is the standard and guide for many who follow instinctively where a strong man leads. So, among the other things which young people must decide for themselves is whether they will be in their particular sphere leaders or trailers. Perhaps you will decide that you have powers which, if trained and directed with conscience and with steady purpose, will enable you to lead, instead of to trail after: to help, instead of being one of the ninety-nine to hang upon a stronger one. *Archer Brown.*

God's Way with Us. Many people depend too much on others. They always seek advice and help. By and by, however, in some trying experience, they turn to the old sources of counsel, strength, or aid, and find the place empty. Unused to act for themselves, lacking the wisdom, confidence, and ability which training in self-dependence alone can give to any one, they fail, and sink under the burden. If only they had been trained to think and act for themselves, to fight their own battles, to carry their own loads, they would not have been so helpless when caught in the sudden stress of circumstances.

Parents who shelter their children from every rough wind, who think and plan for them and do everything for them in youth, never inuring them to burdens, to responsibility, to self-care, are not preparing them in the wisest way for life. That is not God's way with us. He does not save us from struggle, from tasks, from thought, from discipline and suffering. He loves us too well for this. He would make us brave, strong, wise, and self-reliant, and therefore He leads us into ways in which we must use every power

we have, and develop every slumbering resource in our nature. Thus He prepares us for meeting whatever experiences the future may bring, and trains us for the best character and the largest usefulness. *Sunday School Times.*

II The True Leader of Our March

Without the Perfect Leader we shall fail. In that book, *The Fair God,* you remember that the Spanish page is lost in the underground chambers, beneath the great native temple in Mexico. A hundred passages run to the right; a hundred to the left; he can not find his way alone. But in the darkness he hears the footstep of a man coming. He hides, and when the slave would pass by he leaps upon him and overcomes him and compels him to lead him out into the city. They advance in the darkness; the slave knows every foot of those dark passages, and when he turns a corner, hard after comes the page. They turn to right, to left, together, and then the glory of the sun of Mexico bursts through the shadows. He followed the guide to the light. So we stand and face the dark unknown future. We are compelled to go into it, there is no choice. Why fail, in trying to fathom it alone? God knows the way and requires no compulsion: follow Him through every darkness if you would find the light. *A. J. Archibald,* in *Current Anecdotes.*

Divine, not Human Guidance. Moses sought to secure the Midianite guide because he was a native of the desert, and had traveled all over it. His experience was his qualification. We have a Brother who has Himself traveled every foot of the road by which we have to go, and has trodden a footpath through the else pathless waste. He knows "how to encamp in the wilderness," for He Himself has "tabernacled among us," and by experience has learned the weariness of the journey and the perils of the wilderness.

His life is our pattern. Our marching orders are brief and simple: Follow your leader and plant your foot in His foot-prints. That is the sum of all ethics, and the *vade mecum* for practical life. Our poor weak hearts long for a brother's hand to hold us up, for a brother's voice to whisper a word of cheer, for a brother's example to animate as well as to instruct. Therefore we have mercifully received God manifest in the flesh, a Brother to be our Guide and the Captain of our salvation. . . .

The true leader of the children of Israel in their wilderness journey was not Moses, but the divine Presence. . . . We have the same divine guidance, if we will; in sober reality we have God's presence; and waiting hearts which have ceased from self-will may receive leading as real as ever the pillar given to Israel. God's providence does still shape our paths, and God's Spirit will direct us within, and God's word will counsel us. In the strength of that confidence let us turn away from dependence upon human guides, and lift our eyes to Him with the voice which is at once a prayer and a vow; "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel." *Alexander Maclaren.*

I go to prove my soul;
I see my way as birds their trackless way;
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit,
I ask not, but
In some good time — His good time I shall come;
He guides me and the bird. In His good time! *Browning.*

How to secure the Divine Guidance. We shall best be led on in the way

of life if we walk in full and clear view of our Leader. We need plainly to see what He is and how He acts in order that we may consistently follow. We must study His teaching, we must reflect upon His life, we must make His spirit our own. We must, as it were, think over His thoughts, live over His life; yes, and die with Him to our sin upon His cross, and rise with Him into the glorious heights of His own holiness. For it is salvation of which He is Captain. It is to our true life He would bring us,—to the life of fellowship and likeness to God, the life of perfection, or completeness, in the image of God. *The Sunday School Times.*

A Prayer. O Lord, who art our guide even unto death, grant us, I pray Thee, grace to follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. In little daily duties to which Thou callest us, bow down our wills to simple obedience under pain or provocation, strict truthfulness of word and manner, humility, kindness; in great acts of duty or perfection, if Thou shouldest call us to them, uplift us to self-sacrifice, heroic courage, laying down of life for Thy truth's sake, or for a brother. *C. G. Rossetti.*

III Come Thou With us and we Will do Thee Good

Whither are we going? Can we honestly invite men to join us in our life march? What is our life march? To what place are we journeying? Who laid its foundation? Are not many men wandering without a destiny? Is it not too usual to have no map of life, no definite end in view, no location that can be named to pursue day and night until we reach its golden streets? There is too much of haphazard in our life — going forth day by day at a venture. Moses knew whither the camps were going; they were all set in one direction. All wisdom says,— Determine your course; have one object in view; be ruled by one supreme purpose. *Joseph Parker.*

The Personal Impress. If you go into a mint you will see them place a bit of metal on the die. Noiselessly and with a touch as silent as a caress but with the power of a mighty force, the stamp moves against it, and when that touch is over, there is an impression upon the coin which will abide when a thousand years are passed away. So one life moves up against another, filled with the power and stamped with the image of Christ's likeness; and when that touch of parent or teacher or friend is over, there are impressions that will remain when the sun is cold and the stars have forgotten to shine. *R. H. Bennett,* in *Homiletic Review.*

All have Influence. The lives of some men are like rivers. Their strength and fervor turn mighty wheels and bear fleets heavy with noble cargoes. The lives of others are like the rain, which you can not trace in a broad stream or measure in horse-power; yet it seeps through the soil, and from the very rocks themselves dissolves the nutriment which gives strength to the forest giant. We need both the river and the rain. *Youth's Companion.*

Go, make thy garden fair as thou canst,
Thou workest never alone,
Perchance he whose plot is next to thine
Will see it, and mend his own. *Robert Collyer.*

The Friends who did Lincoln Good. While Abraham Lincoln lived men wondered how such a man could come from such a beginning. From a child he lived seemingly without one gleam of light or of fair surround-

ings. Such largeness of understanding, such loftiness of purpose, such singleness of aim, such grasp of great moral questions and questions of state — they seemed an effect without a cause; but when, after his death and under the influence of his growing fame, men began to scrutinize all the details of his early life and to find what his early associates had been, not merely the rough pioneers of the frontier settlements, but the men and women of the Bible, of *Pilgrim's Progress,* of Plutarch and of Shakespeare, the mystery was in a large measure explained. He had been associated with the great characters of the world and had grown into their likeness. *Henry P. Emerson.*

Each One is Responsible for Others. Boys are what other boys make them. After leaving school a young man wrote to his former roommate: "I wonder if you noticed any change in me since we came to know each other? You were always so straightforward in everything, and you made me feel that I was exactly contrary, and that you could not care for me at all unless I improved a bit. So you have done me more good than you can imagine." "You can help your fellow men," says Phillips Brooks; "You must help them; but the only way you can help them is by being the noblest and the best man that it is possible for you to be."

Thou must be true to thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow if thou
Another's soul wouldst reach —
It needs the overflowing heart
To give the lips full speech.

Think truly and thy thought
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed. *Horatius Bonar.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

See that Christ is not behind you but before, calling and drawing you on. *Horace Bushnell.*

Life itself is a shipwreck unless Crusoe finds a man Friday whom he can influence and elevate. *Cortland Myers.*

See what God is to the men of the Bible, and then let Him be the same to you. *Maltbie Babcock.*

The blessing of life's schooling is not in knowing the right answer in advance, but in developing power through struggle. *Maltbie Babcock.*

The truest proof of a man's religion is the quality of his companions. *Basil.*

Character can never be found by deputy nor can great works be done, great responsibilities met, and great results realized, by delegation to another. *Hamilton Wright Mabie.*

Beyond all wealth, honor, or even health is the attachment we form to noble souls, because to become one with the good, generous, and true is to become in a measure good, generous, and true ourselves. *Thomas Arnold.*

I pity the boy and still more the girl who is not good company for himself or herself; and the person who is not good company for himself will not be good company for anybody else. *Charles Dudley Warner.*

Whose companionship constitutes the greatest inspiring force in our modern life? There is but one answer — Jesus of Nazareth. *W. H. P. Faunce.*

What a priceless privilege, in a life of increasing change, to look beyond manifest good and seeming evil to the throne of love, and to feel assured that in a world not man's, but God's, our lot is ordered and our path directed by One who loves us better than we can love ourselves! *F. G. Peabody.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth? Jer. 3.4.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. Phil. 1.3.

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 1.3.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Psa. 32.8.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death. Psa. 48.14.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Can you truthfully say to others that if they come with you, you will do them good? Before you can be good company for others you must be good company for yourself. Do you despise all that is mean so that you can encourage others to despise it, too? Are you high-minded and true, so that your association with others will help to elevate and ennoble them?

THE LESSON STORY

Toward the end of the second month in the second year after leaving Egypt, the Israelites left Sinai and advanced towards the wilderness of Paran. As Moses said, they were "journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you," the land of Canaan, unaware as yet that more than thirty-eight years would pass before their descendants, not they themselves, would enter it. In due order they advanced, "according to the commandment of the Lord," first the camp of Judah, and then the others in their prescribed order, the ark and the tabernacle and all its furnishings in the care of those appointed for this service.

Before starting Moses besought Hobab, the son of Reuel the Midianite, to go with them; "Come thou with us and we will do thee good," he said with confidence, assured that God would be with them, and that the good which would come to them from God they would share with him. The ties of country and kindred were strong with the Midianite and he refused the invitation. Again Moses urged him, giving as his reason this time that he could do them good, his experience in desert life, his knowledge of the way, would be

to them, "instead of eyes." In later times we read of Hobab's descendants living in Canaan, and therefore we are led to believe that Hobab yielded to Moses' entreaty.

The lesson closes with the chant which Moses uttered at the beginning of every march when the ark led them on their way—"Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered"—and again when the ark rested,—"Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel." His chants would be echoed by the people, and thus they would keep in mind their close relationship to the Lord their Guide.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The double argument of Moses—Come thou with us and we will do thee good, and Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes,—should be the argument of the Church to-day.

2. How God guides now. If you are at present engaged in something that is to your own conscience doubtful, and if you are not hiding this from God, but would very willingly, so far as you know your own mind, do in the matter what He pleases—if no further light is coming to you, and you feel a growing inclination to put it to God in this way: "Grant, O Lord, that something may happen by which I may know Thy mind in this matter"—this is asking from God a kind of help which He is very ready to give, often leading men to clearer views of duty by events which happen within their knowledge, and which, having no special significance to persons whose minds are differently occupied, are yet most instructive to those who are waiting for light on some particular point. *Marcus Dods.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the account in Deut. 1.19–40. 2. See the dimensions of King Og's bedstead in Deut. 3.11. 3. How did the people decide between the two reports? (Num. 14.1–10.) 4. What followed their decision? (Num. 14.11–39.) 5. When they learned their fate what did they then attempt to do? (Num. 14.40–45; Deut. 19.41–46.) 6. How many of the spies finally entered the Promised Land to take possession? (Num. 14.36–38.) 7. What was Caleb's reward? (Josh. 14.6–15.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

At Taberah the people murmur, and swift and terrible punishment of fire is meted out to them. Further murmurings are heard because they are weary of the manna. In punishment, quails, and with them a plague, are sent. Their weeping and complaining so displeased and disheartened Moses that he appealed to God in a very petulant mood. "I am not able to bear all this people alone," he said, and was told to appoint seventy elders to assist him. In quite another nobler spirit he answered Joshua, who asked him to forbid Eldad and Medad from prophesying; "Art thou jealous for my sake? Would that all Jehovah's people were prophets." Miriam's jealousy of Moses brought leprosy upon her, and Moses interceded with God in her behalf.

THE TWO REPORTS OF THE SPIES

Num. 13.17–20, 23–33. (Read Num. 13, 14.) Commit vv. 30, 31.

Golden Text

**The Lord is with us,
fear them not. Num. 14.9.**

LESSON TEXT Numbers 13.17–20, 23–33

17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this *way* southward, and go up into the mountain:
18 And see the land, what it *is;* and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* strong or weak, few or many;
19 And what the land *is* that they dwell in, whether it *be* good or bad; and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;
20 And what the land *is,* whether it *be* fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time *was* the time of the first ripe grapes.
23 And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs.
24 The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.
25 And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.
26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.
27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this *is* the fruit of it.
28 Nevertheless the people *be* strong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* walled, *and* very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.
29 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.
30 And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.
31 But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they *are* stronger than we.
32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it *are* men of a great stature.
33 And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

17. *Southward.* R. V., *the South.* This term, *the South,* translates the Hebrew word *Negeb,* a geographical term for the southern part of the land of Judah, Canaan. The direction in which the spies went was northward. *The mountain.* R. V., *the hill-country.*

19. *Tents.* R. V., *camps.* Unfortified places, in contrast to "strongholds."

20. *The time of the first ripe grapes.* The vintage in Palestine takes place in September or October, but the first grapes are ripe soon after the middle of July.

23. *The brook of Eshcol.* R. V., *the valley of Eshcol.* The valley may have derived its name originally from Eshcol, the brother of Mamre the Amorite (Gen. 14.13). *Ellicott. They bare it between two on a staff.* Not only because it was very heavy, but because it would not be bruised if carried in this way. *Pomegranates.* Fruit the size of oranges, called sometimes "grained apples"; its transparent grains are arranged in compartments.

25. *Searching.* R. V., *spying out.*

28. *Nevertheless.* R. V., *howbeit. Walled.* R. V., *fortified.*

29. *The south.* The Negeb. *In the mountain.* R. V., *in the hill-country. By the coast of.* R. V., *by the side of.*

30. *Caleb.* Joshua also remonstrated with the people. See Num. 14.6–10.

32. *A land that eateth up the inhabitants.* A land where the people do not prosper.

33. *The giants.* R. V., *the Nephilim.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *Moses sent them to spy out the land.* Why should Moses have sent out Caleb and his comrades to explore a land to which the finger of God was pointing? Their ability to enter the Promised Land had never been based on human resources; was it to be based on human resources now? . . . The question was not the possibility of getting an entrance into Canaan; it was the desirability of getting that entrance. The land was ready for the people; were the people ready for the land? The report which Caleb and his compeers were to bring was to decide, not a question of geography, but a question of philosophy. It was to test the present capacity of the people of God, to determine whether the heart of Israel was ripe for its inheritance. *George Matheson,* in *Representative Men.*

23. *One cluster of grapes.* There is scarcely any region in the world more admirably adapted for wine culture than Palestine, with the exception only of its maritime plains and the Jordan valley. It is the true climate of the vine. The rocky hillsides, with their light, gravelly soil and sunny exposures, the heat of summer, and the rapid drainage of the winter rains, all combine to render it peculiarly a land of vines. Not only Judah, but all the land from Lebanon to Beersheba, was once clad on every hill with terraced vineyards, which have left behind them the traces of their existence in the wine presses and vats hewn in the rocks. . . .

This Eshcol, or Grape Valley, a hill to the south of Hebron, is still clad with vines, and the grapes are the finest and largest in Palestine. Clusters weighing ten to twelve pounds have been gathered. With care and judicious thinning it is known that bunches weighing nearly twenty pounds can be produced. *H. B. Tristram,* in *The Natural History of the Bible.*

30. *Let us go up at once.* The one thing we are told about Caleb is that he was a man of "another spirit" (14.24); that determines the quality of the man. Character is a question of spirit. It is an affair of mind and spiritual glow. Caleb had been upon the preliminary search; Caleb had seen the walls, and the Anakim, and the fortresses, and he came back saying,—We can do

this, not because we have so many arms only or so many resources of a material kind — but because he was a man of "another spirit." In the long run, spirit wins; in the outcome of all history, spirit will be uppermost. *Joseph Parker.*

30. *We are well able to overcome it.* Victory was assured them if they had been willing to go forward. Not one enemy but they could have conquered; not one wall but would have fallen, if they had advanced. The Lord would have

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Grapes of Canaan

been with them to give the victory. But faith and courage failed them, and the task is declined. The only alternative, then, is to go back into the wilderness.

It is always so. The time comes in every life, perhaps comes frequently, when the choice is between going forward into that which is high and better, or back into the wilderness. Many a man to-day who might have been useful

and honored is wandering, dissatisfied, unhappy, and useless to himself or others, because he lacked the faith and courage to go forward when the opportunity came. *J. F. Vichert.*

32. *They brought up an evil report.* It is remarkable how rapidly unbelief grows when it has once found expression. At first it was only a suggestion, verses 28, 29. Then, when Caleb had tried to still the fears to which it had given rise, it became an assertion, verse 31. Lastly, it assumed the form of "an evil report of the land" itself, as of one that "eateth up the inhabitants thereof," verse 32 — where the people are consumed by pestilence or exterminated by constant warfare of fierce races, against whom it were hopeless to attempt contending. That, if such were the views and feelings of the great majority of their best and most trusty men, the people should have risen in rebellion, need not, perhaps, surprise us. But it indicated how thoroughly unprepared Israel was for the possession of the land. *Alfred Edersheim.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

23. *The pomegranates.* The pomegranate from Arabia is large, full of juice, and highly flavored. It was specified as one of the greatest luxuries the Israelites enjoyed in Egypt, the want of which they felt so severely in the sandy desert. No circumstance more clearly proves the value which the Orientals put upon this fruit than the choice which Solomon made of it to represent certain graces of the church: "Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks;" and in the thirteenth verse the children of God are compared to an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits. *Paxton.*

32. *A land that eateth up the inhabitants.* Of a very unhealthy place it is said, "that evil country eats up all the people." "We can not remain in these parts, the land is eating us up." Of England it is said, in reference to her victories, "She has eaten up all countries." *Roberts.*

33. *We were as grasshoppers.* The language of the spies who reported to Joshua that the inhabitants of Canaan were giants, beside whom they themselves were as "grasshoppers," resembles in style and almost in phrase the report of an Egyptian traveler who visited Palestine in about the same era. *Homiletic Review.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The land of Canaan, paragraph 83; the South, paragraph 102; Hebron, paragraph 145; the valley of Eshcol, paragraph 146; Kadesh, paragraphs 70–72; the inhabitants of Canaan, paragraphs 116, 118–125.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in her poem, *An Obstacle*, tells us about a traveler who, struggling up a mountain side with a heavy load, suddenly saw a huge obstacle loom up in his pathway. He begged the obstacle to get out of the path; he became angry and abused it; he knelt down and besought it to move. Finally he settled the difficulty: —

"I took my hat, I took my stick,
My load I settled fair,

I approached that awful incubus
With an absent-minded air —
And I walked directly through him
As if he wasn't there!"

The Israelites have reached a place in their journeys whence they may go and possess the land promised to them by God. But there are great obstacles in their way which they must overcome, there are "giants" there, powerful people with whom they will have to contend. If they are strong in their faith that God will help them, they can easily win; if they lack this faith, then they must turn back into the wilderness for further schooling. To test the temper of the people, Moses selected twelve men, one man from each tribe, to go on into the Promised Land and bring back a report. What were some of the things they were to find out?

For Older Pupils. Caleb is a member of the earliest geographical society. It had twelve members in all. Their names have been preserved; but none has become immortal with the exception of two — Joshua and Caleb. Joshua was rather an actor than an investigator. He was more for the camp than for the council, more for the hour than for the outlook. But Caleb had something of Moses in him. He had an eye for the future. He was capable of Pisgah glimpses. He was one of those whose lives seem always to be pitched upon a hill; he could see things afar off. He is the real hero of this enterprise; he has made the work of exploration his own. Joshua is the actual conqueror of Canaan; Caleb is the man who predicted the advantage of possessing it. *George Matheson,* in *Representative Men of the Bible.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Buts of Life

A Powerful Word. "Surely the land floweth with milk and honey," said the spies, "but (nevertheless) the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there." It overthrows all that precedes it, the fruitfulness of the land, its agreement with what had been told them when God promised it should be theirs, and therefore all their confidence in God's guiding help in their undertakings. This word *but* led to the conclusion, "We are not able to go up against the people," and made them forfeit for themselves their inheritance.

At the Red Sea the command had been, Go forward! "But the sea lies before us." Go forward! "But the Egyptians will overtake us." Go forward! Later came other buts in quick succession. "But we shall perish with thirst." "But we shall starve in the wilderness." "But our soul loatheth this light bread." "But we must have an image of God to worship." And throughout their wilderness life their buts continue, for it is a weak, fretful, childish people of whom Moses is trying to build up a great nation.

A But often heard. We often think that, if we had that man's means, or that man's ability, or that man's opportunity, we could do something worth doing, but, as we are, there is no possibility of any great thing. Yet God does not want us to fill any other man's place, or to do any other man's work. God wants us to improve our own opportunity, with the possessions and the powers that He has given us. It is a very great thing for us to do the best we can

do, just where and as we are. God asks no one of us to do more than this, nor has any one of us a right to do less. *Sunday School Times.*

And, not But. What would it mean to many a life if the buts could be changed to ands! The cities were great, and yet God was greater; the giants were strong, and yet God was stronger. Moses was slow of speech, and Aaron should be his spokesman; he did not think himself equal to the great task of delivering the Israelites from the Egyptians, and yet God would be his Helper.

Ten years ago all the world feared China with its four hundred million people. "Let the sleeping giant alone." The giant was great, and yet little Japan was able to reveal its weakness. Recently the Russians, "The Colossus of the North," were in Manchuria, and menacing Japan. But what could Japan do? Russia held the only land communication with that region, her supply of soldiers was limitless, her Cossacks were the greatest cavalry in the world, Port Arthur was impregnable, etc. And yet Japan attacked the Nephilim and won the victory.

II Discouragers

Discouraging Atmosphere. The air we breathe has much to do with health; in a relaxing atmosphere it is difficult to work; in an atmosphere of vitality it is easy to work. Men are stimulated or depressed by the atmosphere which envelopes those with whom they associate. We never meet some men without going away from them with our ideals a little blurred or our faith in them a little disturbed; we never part from others without a sense of increased hope. *Hamilton Wright Mabie,* in *Works and Days.*

> Methinks we do as fretful children do,
> Leaning their faces on the window-pane,
> To sigh the glass dim with their own breath's stain,
> And shut the sky and landscape from their view;
> And thus, alas!
> We miss the prospect which we are called unto. *Mrs. Browning.*

Discouraged Christians. Some Christians are among the most depressing and worryful people in this world — the most difficult to live with. And some indeed have adopted the theory of Christian ethics which puts a special value upon unhappiness. The morbid spirit which mistrusts every joyful feeling, and depreciates every cheerful virtue, and looks askance upon every happy life as if there must be something wrong about it, is a departure from the beauty of Christ's teaching to follow the dark-browed philosophy of the Orient. *Henry van Dyke.*

What a host there are of the discouraged — those who bear more or less of the sense of defeat! What the advice of worldly-mindedness is we all know. He may say, "Well, cheer up; what can't be cured must be endured," which is true enough, though it affords but little comfort to the possessor of a fatal ailment. Or he may say, "Never mind, others are worse off," which is equally true and equally inadequate as an inspiration to hopefulness.

The advice of the Gospel, God's message to the discouraged is different. You are a Christian, and you are utterly discouraged? No, that can not be; there must be a mistake somewhere. A Christian can not be utterly discouraged over any issue of life. A Christian may become partially discouraged, as Elijah was under the juniper-tree, or as St. Paul sometimes was, but then only as the power

of his faith is weakened; and in proportion as his sense of his peculiar relation to God returns his sense of discouragement will vanish. But a thorough Christian can not become utterly discouraged. *George Francis Greene,* in *The Homiletic Review.*

Discouragements or Inspirations? Two young men come into a church together, and they hear a great preacher, a Phillips Brooks or a Henry Ward Beecher, and one says, "There is no use in my trying to go into the ministry, I never could preach like that:" and the other says, "I am determined I will go into the ministry, for what an ideal is that to work toward!" Two men go into a portrait gallery. One man looks at the pictures and says: "There is no use: I am going to try to be an artist, though try ever so hard, I can not paint such pictures." The other man says: "That is art: I am going to try to be an artist; though I shall not succeed in accomplishing that, there is something worth working for." Whether the ideal is an inspiration or a discouragement depends upon the hope that is united with the ideal. Paul's ideal was Christ, and Paul's hope was Christ. *Lyman Abbott.*

Goethe's mother wrote to a friend: "I never seek out the thorns. I grasp at the small pleasures about me. If the doors are too low, I bow. If I can lift the stone out on my way I do it, but if it is too heavy I go around it. Thus there is no day that does not bring me something to enjoy, and the greatest thing of all — faith in God — keeps my heart light and my face joyful."

III We are well able to overcome

The Reason Caleb was not Discouraged. Disappointing facts do not warrant disappointing conclusions. It is not likely that Caleb and Joshua were delightfully exhilarated by the sight of the giants and the walled towns any more than the other spies were. The giants were actually no bigger, and the walls actually no higher, to the ten than to the two. The facts were the same, but Caleb and Joshua concluded differently. Why? Because they included differently. The ten faced the situation by themselves, the two faced it with God. The ten judged God in the sight of their difficulties, and said, "It can not be done." The two judged the difficulties in the sight of God and said, "We are well able." If, in the bright lexicon of youth, there is no such word as fail, so, in the records of our lives as Christians who trust in the living God, there never should be written, "And they brought back a discouraging report." Let the odds be against us, and obstacles seem insurmountable, we have but to include the Almighty in faith, and ourselves in fidelity, and let God draw conclusions. "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged," is the divine intention concerning every soul, trustful and true. *Maltbie D. Babcock,* in *Thoughts for Every-Day Living.*

The Example of the Pilgrim Fathers. If ever men had a right to lose their courage and give themselves up to dismal wasting, it was the first planters of our own New England. The shore was bleak and wild, the climate severe, the soil a meagre, flinty inheritance. They had everything to create by their own patient industry out of lean and scanty harvests, and without a market, and yet they multiplied their numbers and resources, spreading out from post to post, and conquered by stern effort and economy a continually increasing wealth. Well and manfully it is proved what power there is in character and industry to conquer prosperity anywhere. And yet this people have done only what

it was their duty to do. Had they failed, they would have dishonored the principles they were called to illustrate, and God would have charged it as a crime against them. *Horace Bushnell,* in *The Spirit in Man.*

No Handicap. Psychologists tell us that we see with our brain, not with our eyes. John B. Herreshoff, although totally blind, has learned to see with his hands, as he expresses it, and his blindness has been no handicap to his chosen work, that of building the fastest yachts in the world. "My blindness was an obstacle," he says, "but I simply would not allow it to discourage me, and did my best, just the same as if I could see. My mother had taught me to think, and so I made thought and memory take the place of eyes. I acquired a kind of habit of mental projection which has enabled me to see models in my mind, as it were, and to consider their good and bad points intelligently. Besides, I cultivated my powers of observation to the utmost, in other respects. Even now, I take an occasional trip of observation, for I like to see what others are doing, and so keep abreast of the progress of the age."

Epictetus. When Epictetus was a boy and a slave his angry master twisted his leg in an instrument of torture until it broke.

"Do you think," he says after he has worked out his philosophy of contentment, "that because my soul happens to have one little lame leg I am to find fault with God's universe? Ought we not when we dig, and when we plough, and when we eat, to sing this hymn to God, because He hath given us these implements whereby we may till the soil? Great is God because He hath given us hands, and the means of nourishment and food; and insensible growth, and breathing sleep; these things we ought to hymn, because He hath given us the power to appreciate these blessings and continuously to use them. And, since the most of you are blinded ought there not to be one to fulfill this song for you, and on behalf of all to sing a hymn of happiness to God? And what else can I do, who am a lame old man, except sing praises to God?"

This was the epitaph given him: "Epictetus, a slave maimed in body, a beggar through poverty, and dear unto the immortals."

Rise above your Difficulties. Not till after the death of a member of Parliament, a prominent county magistrate, the owner of large estates, and an active, public-spirited man in all local and national matters, was it known by those who had not seen him that it was but the misshapen block of a man that had lived this active, manly life.

He was born with neither legs nor arms. After his death his story was told: how he resolved when but a boy to act and live as did other boys, without regard to his horrible misfortune; how he persisted in studying every book, in learning every game, in joining in every amusement possible to him with his companions. How, to the last year of his life, he held himself to be as responsible as other men, and bravely paid every tithe of duty to God and to his fellows.

Even in lesser matters in life he pressed to the front. He was the most genial, witty guest at social dinner-tables. Strapped to his horse, he hunted foxes in Yorkshire or tigers in India, and with his brothers made long journeys in other parts of the world. Everywhere his cheerfulness and gaiety gave new life to duller souls.

Is there no lesson for us all in the life of this gallant gentleman? Every boy or girl has some drawback, some difficulty to combat or, harder still — to bear. It may be deafness, an ugly face, a vicious temper, deformity, or a dull

brain. Be sure that every other being has his difficulty, too. Ignore your own, forget it when you can, and above all get above it. "Make of your petty grief a pedestal on which to stand." *Youth's Companion.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Our fears are always greater than our foes. *Ram's Horn*

For Thine own purpose Thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement! *Longfellow.*

What are Christians put into the world for except to do the impossible by the grace of God? *Armstrong.*

The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it: skilful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempests. *Epicurus.*

Faith reasons from God to the difficulties — it begins with Him; unbelief reasons from the difficulties to God, it begins with them. *C. H. Mackintosh.*

What can be more unkind than to communicate our low spirits to others, to go about the world like demons, poisoning the fountains of joy? *Faber.*

Who thinks he will fail, will probably fail: who doubts himself will achieve only such results as will confirm it. *Muriel Strode.*

Even through the very midst of the Slough of Despond there are certain good, substantial steps. *Bunyan.*

If you stand on the mountain of faith and look down, things will seem easy to you; but if you are in the valley of doubt, they will look like giants. *Moody.*

Are there not, Festus, are there not, dear Michal,
Two points in the adventure of the diver,
One — when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge,
One — when, a prince, he rises with his pearl?
Festus, I plunge! *Browning.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. 8.31.

Wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel? Num. 32.7.

Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not neither be discouraged. Deut. 1.21.

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. 1 Sam. 30.6.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverance; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. Psa. 18.2.

THE LESSON STORY

Moses chose twelve men, one from each tribe, and sent them into the hill country of Canaan to find out whether the people there were strong or weak, the cities fortified or not, the land good or bad, advising them to be of good courage and to bring back with them the fruit of the land. After forty days the spies returned to the camp at Kadesh, and the majority gave their report. It was a fruitful land, as the pomegranates and figs and the huge bunch of grapes which two of them carried between them on a staff, testified, but the cities were

walled, and the people, the sons of Anak, the Amalekites, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, were strong and powerful. Then Caleb gave the minority report. The people were strong, but the Israelites were well able to overcome them; let them go up at once and possess the land. These brave words of Caleb aroused the others to defeat him; they were not able to go against the people, they declared, they gave an evil report of the land itself, and in extravagant speech affirmed that they were but as grasshoppers in contrast with the people they had seen in Canaan.

Again we hear the familiar cry from all the people, "Would that we had died in Egypt." Let us return to Egypt. Joshua and Caleb tried to assure them that the land was a good land and God would give it unto their hands, but the people were about to stone them when "The glory of the Lord appeared before all the children of Israel." The Lord decreed that only Joshua and Caleb should enter the Promised Land, all should turn back into the wilderness and there all this generation should die. Having sinned through distrust, the people now sinned through self-confidence. Though Moses and the ark remained in camp, though Moses besought them not to transgress the command of God, they presumed to go up in their own strength into the hill country and were severely punished by the Amalekites.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. There are brakemen enough in the church to last a hundred years, if we never receive another one. They are the men who are afraid the church will go too fast. What we want is more firemen. *L. S. Bates.*

2. The events between the departure from Kadesh-Barnea and the return to it, Num. 33.19–36.

3. Arabia is the soul's training school. (Ex. 3.1–6; 1 Kings 19.1–18; Gal. 1.1–17; Deut. 8.1–6, 15, 16; Gal. 4.22–26.) *Trumbull.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the account of the death of Aaron in Num. 20.22–29. Why was he excluded from the Promised Land? (Num. 20.12.) 2. Look up the references to laws in regard to vows. (Lev. 27; Num. 30.2; Deut. 23.21–23.) 3. Why were the Israelites obliged to go around the land of Edom? (Num. 20.14–21.) 4. What other murmurings of the children of Israel are recorded? See the Subject Index of your Bible, under "Murmurings of Israel, instances of." 5. What became of the brazen serpent? (2 Kings 18.1–4.) What does *Nehushtan* mean? See the margin of your Bible. 6. Read Christ's words to Nicodemus in John 3.5–17. 7. Commit to memory John 3.14; 8.28; 12.32.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

About thirty-eight years intervene between the two lessons, and a large part of the events recorded consists of the repeated murmurings of the people and their consequent punishments. Miriam died, Moses sinned in the way he gave the water at the rock, Aaron died and his son Eleazar succeeded him. See the chapter on geography, paragraphs 73–76.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT

Num. 21.1–9. (Read Num. 20, 21.) Commit v. 9.

Golden Text

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 3.14, 15.

LESSON TEXT Numbers 21.1–9

1 And *when* king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took *some* of them prisoners.

2 And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.

3 And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah.

4 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

5 And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is* no bread, neither *is there any* water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

6 And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

8 And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *King Arad the Canaanite.* R. V., *the Canaanite, the King of Arad.* Arad was the name of a place twenty miles south of Hebron. *By the way of the spies.* R. V., *by the way of Atharim.* The Hebrew word *Atharim* is here regarded as a proper name. *Fought against Israel.* The attack naturally took place when the camp was breaking up, and the King suspected that his territory would be invaded. *Steele.* The order of the narrative in these chapters, as occasionally elsewhere in this book, is not that of time but of subject matter; and the war against Arad is introduced here as the first of a series of victories gained under Moses which the historian now takes in hand to narrate. *Speakers' Commentary.*

2. *I will utterly destroy their cities.* R. V. M., *I will devote.* To devote, or ban, signifies to dedicate something to the Lord in an unredeemable manner — the human beings by being put to death, cattle and inanimate objects being given

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MOSES AND THE BRAZEN SERPENT—*Tissot*

up to the sanctuary for ever or destroyed for the glory of the Lord. (Lev. 27.28, 29.) *Delitzsch.*

3. *They utterly destroyed them and their cities.* This means, as given in the margin of the Revised Version, that they devoted them and their cities to destruction, for they did not fulfil their vow till later. (See Josh. 12.7, 14.) *He called the name of the place.* R. V., *the name of the place was called. Hormah.* "Utter destruction, a devoted thing, or the ban-place."

4. *To compass.* To go around. They were forced to go down the Arabah to the head of the Elamitic Gulf. See Num. 20.14–21; Deut. 2.4–8; Judg. 11.17, 18. *Discouraged.* Hebrew, short, impatient, vexed. *Steele.*

5. *Light.* Margin of Revised Version, *vile.*

6. *Fiery serpents.* Called fiery either from their appearance or from the inflammatory effect of their bite. Serpents abound in the Sinaitic peninsula.

8. *A pole.* R. V., *a standard.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *Discouraged because of the way.* The deep depression of the Arabah through which they marched — intensely hot, bare of vegetation, desolate, rough, and visited by terrible sandstorms — was preëminently "That great and terrible wilderness" of which Moses afterwards reminded the people in Deut. 1.19. *Alfred Edersheim.*

5. *The people spake against God.* This is the new Israel raised up in the wilderness. Their disobedient fathers have perished since the sentence of exclusion from Canaan, pronounced at Kadesh-Barnea thirty-eight years before. But the new Israel is strikingly like the old, faltering and murmuring in hardships, blaming their leaders, and distrusting God. But the sequel shows that there were faith and courage in them sufficient to light their way into Canaan and partially conquer it. *Daniel Steele.*

5. *Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt.* The glories of hope have faded; they resolve to glorify memory. The sun of fancy has ceased to light the hills of Canaan; they will try to kindle it on the plains of Egypt. Egypt, while a present experience, had been the reverse of a glory; but, when the light faded from the future, the past caught a fictitious glow. It is ever thus. When our prospect of the evening becomes overcast, we gild with glory the memory of our morning sky. In no circumstances can man dwell in the present; curtain his Canaan and he will fly back to Egypt. You and I can not live in the hour; if we are not able to go forward we must go back. Our alternatives are hope or memory, Canaan or Egypt, the land of promise or the land of retrospect. The intermediate spot is our desert — a barren waste. Thought can not dwell there, never seeks to dwell there. It must have either wings for to-morrow or wings for yesterday; it must fly away if it would rest. *George Matheson.*

6. *The Lord sent fiery serpents.* The judgment of "fiery serpents" which the Lord, "in punishment, sent among the people," and of which so many died, bore a marked resemblance to all His former dealings. Once more He did not create a new thing for the execution of His purpose, but only disposed sovereignly of what already existed. Travelers give remarkable confirmation and illustrations of the number and poisonous character of the serpents in that district. *Alfred Edersheim.*

8. *Make thee a fiery serpent.* The great impression made upon the Israelites

by the brazen serpent, appears from the fact that they took it with them into Canaan, where it was at first regarded as a sacred relic, but at last was destroyed in the time of Hezekiah, as it had become an object of idolatrous reverence. (2 Kings 18.4.) *Lange.*

8. *When he looketh upon it, he shall live.* If they realized the divine purpose and trusted God while they looked, the power of the poison would be destroyed. The serpent of brass was nothing in itself, was, as Hezekiah long afterwards declared it to be, *nehushtan;* but as a symbol of the help and salvation of God, it served the end. The stricken revived; the camp, almost in a panic through superstitious fear, was calmed. Once more, it was known that He who smote the sinful, in wrath remembered mercy. It must be assumed that there was repentance and faith on the part of those who looked. The serpents appear as the means of punishment, and the poison loses its effect with the growth of the new spirit of submission. It has rightly been pointed out that the heathen view of the serpent as a healing power has no countenance here. That singular belief must have had its origin in the worship of the serpent which arose from dread of it as an embodiment of demoniacal energy. Our passage treats it as a creature of God, ready, like the lightning and the pestilence, or like the frogs and insects of the Egyptian plagues, to be used as an instrument in bringing home to men their sins. *Robert A. Watson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord.* A vow once uttered must be fulfilled according to the law. Numbers 30.2 states that "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." The offerings of houses or land or child or slave thus devoted to God could be redeemed, but not animals for sacrifice. In our text it was the cities of Arad which were devoted, wholly set apart, as spoil to God, a thank-offering in recognition of His help in gaining the victory. In Palestine at the present time the people "vow a vow" on small as well as great occasions.

6. *Fiery serpents.* At Wady Fayran there came a poor cripple invoking assistance. He had been bitten by one of the "fiery serpents" of the desert. Rude attempts at checking the sweep of the poison had resulted in the sloughing off of his foot and the lower part of his leg. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Mount Hor, paragraph 75; the land of Edom, paragraphs 73, 74, 76.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. It is said that a man who was very sick sent for his enemy and humbly asked forgiveness for his part in their trouble, and then, when peace had seemingly been restored between them, he added, "Mind now, if I get well this does not count." Sailors in storms so violent that they are in danger of shipwreck are said to make vows which they forget all about when the storms are over. It is said, too, that girls are very ready to promise that they will do this or that, but when the time comes to keep their prom-

ise they are slow about doing it, and even seem to think they should be excused from doing it at all. Is it true that girls "hate to pay up" more than boys do?

In one of our lessons Jacob vowed a vow to God, saying that if God would do so and so, then he would do something in return. What was this vow? (Gen. 28.20–22.) The Israelites often made vows. We hear about one of their vows in our lesson to-day, and as the Bible records so many of their sins during their forty years in the wilderness we are glad to learn that they did not sin by failing to keep this vow. What was their vow? Why did they make it?

For Older Pupils. Review the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness. See paragraphs 66–76 of the chapter on geography.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Consciousness of Sin

How the Israelites were aroused to their Sin. The Israelites were led to discern their sin through the suffering which the fiery serpents caused them. "Therefore," the record says, "the people came to Moses and said, we have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against thee; pray unto the Lord that He take away the serpents from us." Over and over in the narrative of their desert life has this been their experience,— sin, suffering, repentance, relief. The suffering was God's way of dealing with this impatient people, and they never learned their lesson so well that it needed not to be repeated. That suffering is often caused by sin no one will deny, but that sin is always the cause of suffering, that all sin is punished by suffering, is not the teaching of the Old Testament, — of this the book of Job is a refutation. "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind" His disciples asked Jesus. "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents," answered Jesus.

Christ's Method of Awakening Consciousness of Sin. It was only after Peter and Andrew and James and John had been with Jesus, had seen His life from day to day, and had tried to aid Him in His labors, that they learned to realize their own weaknesses and sins. In the beginning Jesus had simply said to them "Follow Me." "They were not told to begin by interrogating their past — by asking themselves whether they were worthy to follow," says Doctor George Matheson, but "they were to come without introspection — as Mark puts it, straightway. In nothing is the human wisdom of Jesus more transparent than in this postponing of repentance. Self-introspection requires a light; and the light must come before the searching. How shall a man judge of his want of charity except by first joining the league of pity? It is by pity and by pity alone that I learn the want of it. Before all things the light must come. It is this light which must kindle the fire of my remorse. It is by the burning bush in my desert that I find it to have been a desert; previous to that illumination it was my city, my native air."

Conscience. *Conscience* and *conscious* are both derived from the same Latin word, *conscire,* to know. Conscience is consciousness in the realm of right and wrong. Conscience not only tells you what is right and what is wrong, but bids you do the right and avoid the wrong. The impulse to do the right follows the consciousness of the right. And consciousness of the right

needs to be cultivated. Conscience is like the needle of a compass. It will point to the North Pole only if it has been magnetized by being near a true magnet.

Ignorance of Sin. A sadly large percentage of men never have really opened their eyes to the undeniable truth that sin has dominion over them. They go along on the surface of things, keeping to the shallows of human life, occupying themselves with their various duties and enjoyments, and they never know, just because they shut their eyes to facts, or rather turn their eyes away from facts — what is their condition in God's sight. . . . Many of us live in a fool's paradise of ignorance of our own sin. It is because we will not attend to the facts that we ignore the facts. The evils that we do, and that we cherish within our hearts, are like the wreckers on some stormy coast, that begin operations by taking the tongue out of the bell that hangs on the buoy, and putting out the light that beams from the beacon. Sin checks conscience; and so the worse a man is, the less he feels himself to be bad; and while a saint will be tortured with agonies of remorse for some slight peccadillo, a brigand will add a murder or two to his list, and wipe his mouth and say, "I have done no harm." We are ignorant of our sin because we bribe our consciences, because we drug our consciences, because we will not attend to the facts of our own spiritual being. . . .

I do not know that anybody ever comes to absolute and entire insensitiveness of conscience. I hope not. But many of us do come awfully near it, and all of us tend towards it in some directions. For I suppose we all know what it is to have faults, sins, to which we are so disposed and habituated as that there is very little, if any, conscious check or pull-back when we contemplated doing them again. It is an awful solitude into which a man comes then. With our own hands we pull up the buoys, and put out the light houses, and pitch overboard the compass, and lash the helm, and go to sleep in our bunks — and what happens then? Why, we are bumping on the black rocks, with half the ship's side torn to shivers, before we know where we are. *Alexander Maclaren.*

The Best feel Sin the Most. In his book on John Bunyan, in the "English Men of Letters" series, Froude made light of those pangs of conscience which induced the conversion of the renowned author of *Pilgrim's Progress.* What had Bunyan ever done wrong? He had been frivolous, had broken the Sabbath, and had been profane. Were such sins sufficient to warrant suffering of soul? No, thinks Froude; they were trifles, and Bunyan's mental agony was absurd. But Bunyan was truer to human nature than the great historian. It is not those who commit the greatest crimes who have the deepest pangs of heart. It is the best men who feel sin the most. No man who truly knows himself can fail to see that he needs to be made pure within. *Joseph Dunn Burrell.*

Of all acts, is not, for man, repentance the most divine? The deadliest sin were the consciousness of no sin. The heart so conscious is divorced from sincerity, humility, and fact. *Carlyle.*

II As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life

The Meaning of Christ's Words in our Golden Text. When our Lord

recalled the episode of the healing of Israel by means of the brazen serpent, He certainly did not mean that the image in itself was in any sense a type or even a symbol of Him. It was lifted up; He was to be lifted up: it was to be looked upon with the gaze of repentance and faith: He is to be regarded, as He hangs upon the cross, with the contrite, believing look: it signified the gracious interposition of God, who was Himself the true Healer; Christ is lifted up and gives Himself on the cross in accordance with the Father's will, to reveal and to convey His love — these are the points of similarity. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." The uplifting, the healing, are symbolic. The serpent-image fades out of sight. Christ is seen giving Himself in generous love, showing us the way of life when He dies, the Just for the unjust. He is the power of God unto salvation. Israel's past and the grace of God to the stricken tribes are connected by our Lord's words with the redemption provided through His own sacrifice. The divine Healer is there and here; but here in spiritual life, in quickening grace, not in an empirical symbol. Christ on the cross is no mere sign of a higher energy; the very energy is with Him, most potent when He dies. *Robert A. Watson.*

It is the Manner of His Death which will attract Attention. The one rite Jesus institutes is a rite which is to keep His death in the mind of the world through setting forth its tragic and striking character — His "broken body and shed blood." The apostles after Christ catch His thought in this respect. They draw attention to the death through the manner of it. They preach, not "Christ dying," but "Christ crucified." It is a death which friends would ordinarily wish to keep out of mind, but they glory in the "cross." Paul determines not to know anything among the Corinthians save Christ "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." He has talked philosophy, and rhetoric, and poetry at Athens, only to be laughed out of town. He has come to Corinth discouraged, "in weakness and much trembling." He will therefore simply tell the story of the life and death of Christ, with all its striking features, from the beginning in His birth as the Son of God, through all the memorable sayings and doings of His life, to the ending on Golgotha's hill where He dies, lifted on the cross. *M. G. Allison.*

We are Transformed. In mid-Atlantic, the other day, the Etruria suddenly stopped. Something was wrong with the engines. There were five hundred able-bodied men on board the ship. Do you think that if we had gathered together and pushed against the mast that we could have pushed it on? When one attempts to save himself by effort, he is trying to make his boat go by pushing against the mast. He is like a drowning man trying to lift himself out of the water by pulling at the hair of his own head. Christ held up this method almost to ridicule when He said, "Which of you by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature?"

Observe the simple passive in "we are transformed." We are changed, as the Old Version has it — we do not change ourselves. Throughout the New Testament you will find that wherever these moral and spiritual transformations are described the verbs are in the passive. This passivity does not deny all human effort or ignore intelligible law. What is implied for the soul here is no more than is everywhere claimed for the body. In physiology the verbs describing the processes of growth are in the passive. Growth is not voluntary; it takes place, it happens, it is wrought upon matter. Not more certain it is that

it is something outside the thermometer that produces a change in the thermometer, than it is something outside the soul of man that produces a moral change upon him. That he must be susceptible to that change, that he must be a partner to it, goes without saying: but that neither his aptitude nor his will can produce it, is equally certain. . . .

According to the first Law of Motion: Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, except in so far as it may be impelled by impressed forces to change that state. This is also the first law of Christianity. Every man's character remains as it is, or continues in the direction in which it is going, until it is compelled by impressed forces to change that state. Our failure has been the failure to put ourselves in the way of the impressed forces. There is the clay, and there is a Potter: we have tried to get the clay to mould the clay. *Henry Drummond,* in *The Changed Life.*

Assurance of Salvation. I sit down with the open Word of God, which shows me the characteristic marks of a soul that has been renewed. My own spirit tells me that these characteristic marks can be found in me. I am conscious of a transforming change in feeling and in life. Though I am not all that I ought to be, still I am very different from what I once was. My affections Godward are changed for the better, my ambitions are changed, my life, too, is greatly changed. . . . The Bible is a delight. Prayer is a joy. I surrender myself to Christ as once I never did. . . . These are simple facts of my own experience and consciousness. I know them to be so. And the Holy Spirit interprets to me the meaning of these facts. It is that I have been "born again," for "all things are new." And thus He "*bears witness with my spirit*" that I am a child of God. *G. H. Knight.*

III Looking up with Faith

Man the Looker-up. The Greek word ἄνθρωπος is derived by some authorities from the root ἄνω "upward," and in Greek "man" is, accordingly, "the looker-up."

Milton in *Paradise Lost* calls Mammon

> "The least erected spirit that fell
> From heaven; for even in heaven his looks and thoughts
> Were always downward bent."

The brazen serpent in the wilderness was an ordinance. "Christ is God's great ordinance." As the children of Israel were saved from death by looking with faith up to the brazen serpent, so we are saved from eternal death by "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Faith is the instrument in each case whereby salvation is attained.

Repentance and Faith. Repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ are each an act; as much so as repentance for a wrong done to an earthly friend and trust in his forgiveness. What is repentance? To cease to do evil and to begin to do well; to cease to live to ourselves and to begin to live to God. And what is faith? It is an act of confidence by which we commit ourselves to Another to be saved by Him. *George Park Fisher.*

Faith Genuine, though Feeble. If God made no response except to perfect faith, who could hope for help? But God has regard for beginnings, and His eye perceives greatness in the germ. The hand of the woman in the crowd trembled as it was stretched toward Jesus, and the faith back of it was sur-

reptitiously reverent, trusting in the virtue of the robe, rather than in the One who wore it; yet the genuineness of that faith, feeble though it was, triumphed in God's loving sight. Real trust is real power, though the heart and hand both tremble. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

The Influence of that upon which we look. We are all very much affected by the things we look at from day to day. A man will find sights congenial to his heart and mind. If he be artistic he will be on the outlook for pictures and sculpture, or beautiful scenes in nature. If he have a turn for science, he will find objects of study and delight in every field and wood. Now all these objects, in turn, react upon us. The artistic mind grows and expands by the study of beauty. The scientific man becomes more scientific by the study of nature. Apply this to the gospel. Look at Christ, look daily, look appreciatively, lovingly, in tender sympathy, and the Spirit of Christ will possess you. We may not be able to tell how the change comes about, nor why, neither need we anxiously inquire, provided we look at Christ and feel the Spirit's power. *George Walker.*

One of the biographers of Robertson, of Brighton, tells a touching story of the wonderful influence exercised by the great preacher over those who waited on his ministry. A shopkeeper had in his little parlor behind the shop a portrait of Robertson on the wall. Whenever in his business he was tempted to trickery or meanness he would hurry into the back room and look at the picture. "And then, sir, I felt that it was impossible for me to do it." He could not sin after he had looked into that pure face. . . .

In the biography of Jesus Christ we are brought face to face with the image of the perfect life, and the longer we remain under the influence of that image the nobler will our words and deeds become.

Just as the sun photographs itself on the sensitive plate exposed to its light, so Christ is formed in the soul that keeps looking unto Him in love, obedience, and imitation. *D. Sutherland.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Repentance is awakening to fact. *John Watson.*

Conviction is a discovered sinner; conversion is a discovered Saviour. *Selected.*

They that cry without cause have justly cause given them to cry out. *Matthew Henry.*

Repentance looks back and forsakes; faith looks forward and accepts. *William N. Clarke.*

Satan, the hinderer, may build a barrier about us, but he can never roof us in, so that we can not look up. *J. Hudson Taylor.*

When we are expecting or desiring mercy from God, we should bind our souls with a bond that we will faithfully do our duty to Him, particularly that we will honor Him with the mercy we are in pursuit of. *Matthew Henry.*

The conscience requires to be enlightened: God's law is written on it; but the lettering is like that of an old inscription, where the words are filled up with moss and mould, so that they are apt to be misread and require to be recut. *James Stalker.*

In our youth religion attracts us more by the ideals and aspirations with which she inspires our strength, than by the remedies and reliefs which she of-

fers to our weakness: but as the years go on it is the sense of the need of forgiveness of which we become most aware. *George Adam Smith.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou thalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. Deut. 23.21.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Heb. 12.1, 2.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. John 12.32.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. Isa. 45.22.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3.23.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6.23.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Each one had to look for himself. No one could look for another. It was a personal question. No one could be saved by proxy. There was life in a look, but the look must be given. There needed to be a personal link — direct individual contact with God's remedy. Thus it was then, and thus it is now. We must be the personal link with the Saviour, else there is no life. Faith is an individual thing; repentance is an individual thing; salvation is an individual thing. Let us never forget this We can neither get life nor live by the faith of another. *C. H. Macintosh.*

THE LESSON STORY

The Israelites are nearing the end of their forty years of life in the wilderness. Moses is an old man and Joshua is already the military leader. Miriam and Aaron have died. It was soon after their mourning for Aaron at Mount Hor that the King of Arad, fearing that they were on the point of invading his territory, advanced upon them and gained a measure of victory. The people then vowed a vow that if God would deliver these Canaanites into their power, they would devote to Him all the spoil of their cities. This vow they afterwards kept. Since they could not enter Canaan by the direct route, they were obliged to take a circuitous one around the land of Edom, and as they journeyed first southward over the sand and rocks of the terrible desert of the Arabah, they were "much discouraged because of the way." Most of the grumblers who had complained of the manna not long after it was given them were now dead, but these their descendants uttered the old familiar cry against Moses, "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? — our soul loatheth this light bread." Punishment followed their sin. So many of them died from the bite of poisonous serpents that they came to Moses and, acknowledging their sin, begged him to pray to the Lord to take away the serpents. Moses was their willing mediator. At God's command he erected a brazen serpent on

a standard, and whoever believed God and looked in faith upon it was cured.

Jesus Himself pointed out the similarity between the faith in their act and the resultant cure, and the faith of those who, after the Son of Man was lifted up even as that serpent in the wilderness, believed and received eternal life. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me," He promised, and that promise is still being kept.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. "The lifting of a finger on the Stock Exchange is binding, even if thereby a man lose a fortune; but the covenant of a Church, even when entered into with the most solemn ritual, oftentimes is laid aside as easily as a garment."

2. As the rain-filled streams and rills of highland ridges center in the mountain lake that forms the reservoir from which the inhabitants of our great cities draw their daily supply, so all types, emblems, rites, codes of moral and spiritual enactments, all forms of truth in the Old Testament, pointed and led up to Him who was Living Truth. *R. Balgarnie.*

3. I have devoted as much time as any man living to the study of the sacred books of the East, and I have found the one key-note, the one refrain through all—salvation by works. Let us not shut our eyes to what is excellent and true and of good report in these books, but let us teach Hindoos, Buddhists, Mohammedans, that there is only one book whose gospel can be their mainstay in that awful hour when they pass all alone into the unseen world. It is the sacred book that contains that faithful saying that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. *Max Müller.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. When did Christ quote verse 4? (Mark 12.29.) 2. What one of the patriarchs was known to follow the command of verse 7? (Gen. 18, 19.) 3. Look up these references in regard to making memory lasting: Prov. 3.3; 6.20, 21; 7.1–3. 4. Of what did Christ accuse the Pharisees in regard to their phylacteries? (Matt. 23.5.) 5. How did Christ answer the question as to which was the great commandment? (Matt. 22.34–40; Mark 12.28–34.) 6. Look up these references in Deuteronomy to the love of God as the motive for action: 10.12; 11.1; 13.3, 4; 19.9; 30.15–20. 7. On what occasion did Christ quote the first part of verse 13? (Matt. 4.10.) 8. What does "Thou shalt swear by his name," verse 13, mean? (Gen. 31.53; Ex. 23.13; Matt. 5.33.) 9. Read Paul's farewell message to the Ephesians. (Acts 20.28–38.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The Israelites continued their journey around the land of Edom, and being refused passage through the land of the Amorites they engaged in battle with Sihon the king and conquered him. After conquering Og, also, another Amorite king, they continued their journey northward till they encamped on the plains of Moab east of the Jordan opposite Jericho. Then took place Balaam's prophecies, the census of the people, the warning to Moses of his death and appointment of Joshua as his successor, the slaughter of the Midianites, and the settlement of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Mannasseh in Gilead.

LESSON XI — SEPTEMBER 15

MOSES PLEADING WITH ISRAEL

Deut. 6.1–15. (Read Deut. 5, 6). Commit vv. 4–7.

Golden Text

Beware lest thou forget the Lord. Deut. 6.12.

LESSON TEXT Deuteronomy 6.1–15.

1 Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it.

2 That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it;* that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God *is* one Lord:

5 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10 And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not,

11 And houses full of all good *things,* which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12 *Then* beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

13 Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you;

15 (For the Lord thy God *is* a jealous God among you;) lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *These are the commandments.* R. V., *this is the commandment.* The word is here equivalent to the word Law. *Statutes* and *judgments* are explanatory of the word *commandment. Judgments,* R. V., *ordinances. Statutes,* duties of moral obligation; *ordinances,* precepts securing the mutual rights of men. *Espin.*

2. *That thy days may be prolonged.* See Deut. 8.1.

3. *In the land that floweth with milk and honey.* A proverbial statement.

5. *With all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might,* phrases intended to include every faculty of man. See Matt. 22.37–40; Mark 12.29–31.

6. *These words.* Verses 4 and 5.

8. *As frontlets between thine eyes.* On the forehead. They are called phylacteries in the New Testament.

9. *Posts.* R. V., *doorposts.*

11. *Houses.* The Israelites had not dwelt in houses since they left Egypt. *Wells digged which thou diggedst not.* R. V., *cisterns hewn out which thou hewedst not.*

13. *Swear by his name.* A person taking an oath invokes naturally the name of the God whom he reveres; an oath is, accordingly, a peculiarly solemn confession of faith. "He that sweareth by Jehovah" (Psa. 63.12) is thus a sign of Jehovah's true worshiper. *Driver.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

4. *The Lord our God is one Lord.* Does *one* express the *unity* of Jehovah, declaring that He is in His essence indivisible, can not assume different phases or attributes, as presiding over different localities, or different departments of Nature? Or does it denote the *uniqueness* of Jehovah, representing Him as God in a unique sense, as the only Deity to whom the true attributes of the Godhead belong? The second interpretation gives the higher and fuller meaning to the term. The first interpretation is not, however, excluded by it; for the unity of Jehovah is an almost necessary corollary of His uniqueness. The verse is thus a great declaration of Monotheism. *S. R. Driver.*

The Bible teaches from beginning to end the fact of one God. Where did the writers get this idea? Certainly not from the nations around them. Herodotus informs us that 500 B. C. there were in Egypt more gods than men. In India there are not fewer than three hundred million of false gods. The Persians worship almost everything associated with light or fire. The fields, groves, and cities of Greece were full of imaginary deities. And yet all the Bible writers for fifteen hundred years taught that there is only one God. *A. C. Dixon.*

6. *These words shall be in thine heart.* The important thing is to write on the heart, because there the writing will be always with you and always before you. Whatever really impresses and rules us is said to be written on the heart. "Cut deeper," said the wounded soldier, to the surgeon who was trying to extract a bullet, "Cut deeper, and you'll find the Emperor." He meant that what he had most at heart was the Emperor and his service. You ordinarily speak of learning by heart your lesson, when more truly it might be called learning by head; but the knowledge that God wants, and looks to, is emphatically a heart-knowledge and a heart-learning. *J. S. Maver.*

13. *Thou shalt serve Him.* "Two gospels lie side by side in the New Testament. There is the gospel of being helped and the gospel of being helpful. . . . Beside the parable of the Prodigal Son stands the parable of the Good Samaritan. Beside the blessed invitations stand the Beatitudes on service. We have only half the joy and blessing if we stop short after hearing the first glad word. We have the full message when we hear the lips that whispered 'Come unto me' saying also, 'Go ye' into all the world." *Sunday School Times.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

4. *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.* These words form the beginning of what is termed *Shama* ("Hear") in the Jewish service, and belong to the daily morning and evening office. They may indeed be termed the creed of the Jews. Their expression is in the original singularly terse and forcible. "Jehovah our Elohim, Jehovah one." The last letter of the first and last words of this verse are written larger than the ordinary size; together they form a word signifying "witness." It is uncertain how this difference in writing originated. It is construed by the Jewish commentators as highly significant, and is held to import that the utterance of this verse is to be accounted a witness for the faith; or that God is a witness of the sincerity and earnestness of him who utters it. *T. E. Espin,* in *Speakers' Commentary.*

When this passage occurs in the Sabbath readings in the Jewish Synagogue, the whole congregation repeat the last word, *Achad* (Lord) for several minutes together with the loudest vociferations. *Adam Clarke.*

8. *Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.* The frontlet, or phylactery, in later times was composed of four pieces of parchment, on the first of which was written Ex. 13.1–10; on the second, Ex. 13.11–16; on the third, Deut. 6.4–9; and on the fourth, Deut. 11.13–21. These pieces they enclosed in a piece of tough skin, making a square, on one side of which was placed the Hebrew letter *shin* (ש) and bound them round their foreheads with a thong, or ribbon, when they went to the synagogue. Some wore them evening and morning, and others only at the morning prayer.

The Frontlet between the Eyes

For the "sign on the hand" they made two rolls of parchment, written in square letters with much care. They were rolled up to a point, and enclosed in a sort of case of black calf-skin. This was then put on a square bit of the same leather, whence hung a thong of the same, of about a finger in breadth and about two feet long. This roll was placed at the bending of the left arm, and after the end of the thong had been made into a little knot in the form of the Hebrew letter *yod* it was wound about the arm in a spiral line, which ended at the top of the middle finger. *Joseph Parker.*

The ancient Egyptians commonly wore amulets of various kinds; some consisting of words written on folds of papyrus tightly rolled up and sewn in

linen have been found at Thebes; and the modern Egyptians still continue the practice. *T. E. Espin.*

9. *Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house.* The Egyptians placed inscriptions on the doorposts of their dwellings, and in Moslem countries passages of the Koran are inscribed on houses and gates and bridges. The orthodox Jew even to this day has his *mezuza,* a cylindrical tube of glass, of metal or wood, enclosing a parchment on which is written Deut. 6.4–9 and Deut. 11.13–21, fastened to the side-post on the right hand side of the door. On the outside of the parchment the word *Shaddai* (Almighty) is written, and a portion of the tube is cut out so that this word may be plainly seen. "Every pious Jew, as often as he passes the mezuza, touches the divine name with the finger of his right hand, puts it to his mouth and kisses it, saying in Hebrew, 'The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and forevermore;' and when leaving on a business expedition he says, after touching it, 'In thy name I go out and shall prosper.'"

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

To Moab, paragraphs, 77, 78. The plains of Moab, paragraphs 79–81.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. One of the greatest historical documents of our country is George Washington's Farewell Address. He had been President of the United States for two terms, and he wished no longer to bear the burdens of his great office. In his address he reviewed past events, and also looked forward into the future and counseled his countrymen what to do in troublesome questions which were sure to arise. Throughout the address we see how dear to his heart was the welfare of his country.

Moses has served his countrymen for forty long years, and he is soon to leave them, for God has warned him that he is not to enter with them the Promised Land. Within ten days before his death he gives them three farewell addresses. Like Washington, he repeats to them the events of their long life since leaving Egypt; he knows what temptations await them in the Promised Land, and he warns them especially against forgetting God, and worshiping idols. He knows his troublesome people well, knows all their weaknesses and wickedness, but he does not scold them. Compassionately he says to them, "The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." Like a father he pleads with them to remember all that God has done for them.

For Older Pupils. A wonderful change has taken place in the tone of Moses. We can tell by his very voice that he is much older than when we first knew him, and much tenderer. When we first heard his voice, we noted how singularly wanting it was in mellowness, sympathy, kindliness, such as sore and wounded hearts may recognize and bless. Throughout the Book of Exodus the tone of Moses was very high, penetrating, and commanding. Then a change took place in the whole manner of the man; in Deuteronomy, Moses exhorts, entreats, wrestles with men, that they may be wise and good; there is nothing wanting that is suggestive of ripeness of experience, depth and genuineness of sympathy. Moses becomes a shepherd again, only now

men and women and children, more wayward than any beasts of the earth, constitute his multitudinous and most trying flock. Read Deuteronomy immediately after Exodus, and mark, though the fire of his eyes is not dimmed, the growth of the man in the softening of his voice, in the multitude of his tears, in his pastoral solicitude for the salvation of Israel. *Joseph Parker.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Thou shalt talk of These Words

Thou shalt teach them diligently unto Thy Children. A century ago an English deist, calling upon Coleridge, inveighed bitterly against the rigid instruction in Christian homes. "Consider," said he, "the helplessness of a little child. Before it has wisdom or judgment to decide for itself it is prejudiced in favor of Christianity. How selfish is the parent who stamps his religious ideas into a child's receptive nature, as a molder stamps the hot iron with his model. I shall prejudice my children neither for Christianity nor for Buddhism nor for atheism, but allow them to wait for their mature years. Then they can open the question and decide for themselves."

Later the poet led his atheistic acquaintance into the garden. Suddenly he exclaimed: "How selfish is the gardener who ruthlessly stamps his prejudice in favor of roses and violets and strawberries into a receptive garden-bed. The time was when in April I pulled up the young weeds, the parsley, and thistle, and planted the garden-beds out with vegetables and flowers. Now I have decided to permit the garden to go until September. Then the black clods can choose for themselves between cockleberries and currants and strawberries." *Newell Dwight Hillis.*

Out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh. There is a law which requires that that which is in us, if it has any life in it and any energy in it, should find utterance. Why do men weep? Why do men laugh? Not that they may get sympathy simply or chiefly, but because the sorrow or the joy which is in them will not be hidden. Why do the poets sing? They sing as the linnets do, because they must. Peter and John were so full of Christ that it was impossible for them to hold their peace. They must speak, they could not be quiet, altogether apart from any consideration of duty; but there were considerations of duty. Oh, if we have seen and if we have heard, it is impossible for us to be silent. If we have not seen, if we have not heard — I mean, if the religion of Jesus Christ is to us no more than a tradition which is given to us, to which we have listened, and it has never laid hold of us or awakened any great interest in our minds, in that case we shall not feel, perhaps, that there is any obligation upon us to speak. *Arnold Thomas.*

We believe, and therefore speak. At the close of our war with Spain, our cruiser *Texas* lay beside the *Christobal Colon,* the last surrendered Spanish ship. All was quiet, and most of the crew were below, when Captain Philip gave the order, "All hands to muster!" When all the crew were gathered before their commander, he uncovered his head and said reverently, "I want to make public acknowledgment that I believe in God, the Father Almighty. I want all you officers and men to lift your hats, and from your hearts offer silent thanks to God." And every hat was taken off and every head was bowed. No one knows how much good he can do by professing his faith before

men. "Some things may be too sacred to be spoken of," says Joseph Parker, "but the Gospel is not one of them. It was created to be told, to be translated into every tongue."

II Beware lest Thou forget the Lord

Read and Re-read God's Words. To aid them in remembering God and His laws the Jews wore the frontlets and the "tokens" on the arms, in much the same way as children now tie knots in their handkerchiefs or change the rings on their fingers to remind them of something they must not forget. In an age when there was no Bible in the homes, the mezuza on the doorposts was a helpful reminder of God's words.

The later Jews greatly revered their sacred city of Jerusalem, and those who lived at a distance, and could come to it only on the annual pilgrimages for one of their great festivals, would have its name stamped upon their bare arms when they were leaving, that this might be to them a constant reminder of the Holy City.

Do we reverence God's words, and do we seek to keep them in remembrance by often reading them?

Not Hidden forever. The most magnificent church building in the world, and possibly the oldest, is the one dedicated in Constantinople one thousand three hundred and sixty-six years ago by the Emperor Justinian, and named the Sancta Sophia, that is, the "Holy Wisdom," or Holy Word. It cost many million dollars, and was begun and finished in the incredibly short space of five years.

Nine hundred and sixteen years after its dedication Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks, and ever since then the majestic Christian church has been known as the Mosque of St. Sophia, the Mohammedans adopting it as their religious temple, and covering, as far as they could, the Christian symbols with those of their own faith. Bible verses chiselled in the stone, carven crosses, cherubim, etc., with faces of saints and martyrs, were concealed with plaster, and written over with Koran texts and the praises of the califs.

For five centuries the sacred sculptures have lain hidden under the usurper's mortar, among them a relievo of the face of Jesus on the wall of the apse or pulpit end of the great nave or center aisle; but around this, we are told by visitors who have been admitted into the guarded sanctuary, the crust has cracked and crumbled, and the stucco is falling away, until, looking forth from its long eclipse, can once more be seen the countenance of Christ.

In the turmoil of the world the forgetfulness of even the declared followers of the "Son of Man" may suppress His spirit and ignore His presence as effectually as the trowel of the Turk concealed His image. But all the mistakes of men and the strifes of nations can not hold Him unseen and silent forever. *Youth's Companion.*

Our Tendency to forget what God has done for us. It is amazing that the Israelites could ever allow that awful scene at the Red Sea, when the Egyptians were destroyed, to pass from their minds. Yet they did, and how frequently God caused the psalmists and prophets to speak of it in order to renew their remembrance. Look at Psa. 136.13–15; Num. 21.14; Deut. 11.4; Josh 2.10; Neh. 9.9; Psa. 106.9; Jer. 49.21.

But are we less forgetful? How frequently do our Lord and the apostles call

upon us to remember! See Matt. 16.9; Luke 16.25; 17.32; 24.6; John 15.20; Acts 20.31, 35; Eph. 2.11; 2 Tim. 2.8; Jude 17.

When Charles I was on the scaffold he lifted up his finger and said to his enemies who clustered around him, "Remember!" *W. Justin Harsha.*

Recessional.

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart,
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget! *Rudyard Kipling.*

III Is God Vindictive?

What Words stand for. Very interesting is it to read the life of Helen Keller and see how this blind, dumb and deaf girl was taught to understand language. She was six years old before any means of communicating with her had been discovered. Her teacher has told how day after day she spelled words upon her hands, but could not make her understand that the words had any connection with things, and how great was Helen's joy when at the well she learned that the word "water" meant the cold something which she could feel. Then later when trying to add figures, she grasped the meaning of the abstract word, "thinking." And when Phillips Brooks taught her the word "God," she exclaimed: "O yes, I knew about Him, only I didn't know His name was God."

The early Israelites were groping in their minds for words in which to express their thoughts of God. When Joshua told them that "God is a jealous God," that "He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that He hath done you good," he was telling them the fact that God punishes sin, and he told it to them in language which they could understand, for they knew the meaning of a jealous man and a revengeful man.

Misrepresenting God. Not long ago a gentleman quoted to me the last clause of Hebrews, 12.29, "Our God is a consuming fire," and said, "That is your religion."

One of the founders of the church of which I am pastor, said to me after the Decalogue had been read in public worship: "That word 'Jealous' in the second commandment always grates upon my ears. I do not believe God is jealous." He misapprehended the meaning; the word conveyed to him, as no doubt it conveys to thousands, a wrong impression of the character of God, which shadows their whole thought of religion.

Jehovah is a jealous God. He even says His "name is 'jealous.'" He declares that He will not give His glory to another falsely called God. But does this mean that Jehovah is petty, and narrow and grudging; fearful lest He may

miss some credit that is due Him? No! He is jealous for His people, not of them. As a ruler for His subjects or fellow citizens, lest they throw away their liberty. As a father for his children lest they waste their opportunities, and become less worthy men and women than they might be.

Exactly this aspect of the divine character is meant when it is said that "our God is a consuming fire." The New Testament writer quotes it from Deuteronomy 4.24, with the purpose of showing that God is the same under the later covenants as under the earlier. And in Deuteronomy it reads, "Jehovah thy God, is a devouring fire, a jealous God." We have, therefore, in other words exactly the same fact that we have already examined. God is jealous for His people's salvation and holiness. He will consume whatever stands in their way, whether it be without them, or within. All shall be swept away except character, which alone is permanent. What a plea for humble reverence and holy awe!

"God is love." This is the one comprehensive definition of Himself that He has given. It is the summing up of all preceding disclosures of His nature and character, which were necessarily partial as this is complete and final.

Think of defining our Federal government in terms of the jail, penitentiary, gallows, electric chair. Yet these all exist, as they must, under the freest and kindest government on earth. Think of describing our courts of justice only by their convictions and sentences of the guilty, never by their acquittals and vindications of the innocent.

Infinitely more untrue is it to define God in terms of any of His attributes except that one which, upon His own solemn declaration, precludes them all — "God is love." Shall we call love weak good nature and presume upon it? Never. Our God of love is "jealous" and a "consuming fire." He can not bear to see us destroying ourselves. Because He is love He will save us from sin. *Teunis S. Hamlin.*

The Warnings in the Bible against Misconceptions of God. Scripture teaches by the boldest paradox, and presents aspects of the truth that are sharply contrasted, almost contradictory. On the one hand there is not an element even of man's bodily nature which is not ascribed to God. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good; His ears are open to the prayers of His people; His right hand hath the preëminence; His arm is not shortened that it can not secure; and so on through a hundred instances. Did these passages, and such as these, stand by themselves, we might have been tempted to think that some majestic form, like the Jupiter of Phidias, might have been worshiped without reproach in the temple at Jerusalem. And yet, where in the whole range of religious thought is there a stronger protest against accepting these and other like phases as other than a parable and an adaptation? In every manifestation of the divine glory we are reminded with emphatic iteration that there was no form or similitude, that no man hath seen God at any time, that He is essentially Spirit and not flesh, that we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto anything that has been wrought by art or man's device. *E. H. Plumptre.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

All's love, yet all's law. *Browning.*

Do not dare to think that a child of God can worthily work out his career,

or worthily serve God's other children, unless he does both in the love and fear of God their Father. *Phillips Brooks.*

When you fear God, you will never be afraid of Him. *Ram's Horn.*

We may betray Christ by our silence as well as by our speech.

Thou art too much busied about thine own will to become acquainted with the will of God. *Bowen.*

Children have more need of models than of critics. *Joseph Joubert.*

I don't think Satan cares what we worship, so long as we don't worship God. *Moody.*

No one knows how much good he can do simply by professing his faith before men: of course, having is more important than professing, but what is the good of having a flag if you keep it always shut up in your closet? *Sunday School Times.*

If your hearts are full of Christ, can you help talking about Christ to those with whom you constantly live? And to take the question the other way, if you never speak about Christ day after day, can your hearts be full of Christ? *T. K. Arnold.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word. Psa. 119.16.

Come ye children hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Psa. 34.11.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14.15.

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. Psa. 119.59.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. 2.1.

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! Deut. 5.29.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Just as the air we breathed yesterday will not keep us alive to-morrow, but we must continue to breathe to-morrow as well as to-day if we would live, so the words of God which we read or heard yesterday will not keep alive our spiritual nature unless we read them over or think them over to-morrow. Let us turn often to the pages of God's book, and let us constantly beware lest we forget the Lord.

THE LESSON STORY

Moses had safely led his company to the border-land of Canaan, and he sought to instil in their minds the duty of obedience to God's commands when they should enter and possess the land. "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe," said Paul to the Philippians, and to Moses it was not grievous to repeat the same things over and over, and well he knew that for them this was safe. If Israel would both hear and heed his words, and keep God's commands, then they might increase mightily, he told them, even as Christ said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God,

and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Their chief duty is to devote themselves unreservedly to the one and only true God. "Hear, O Israel," his sublime words ring out; "the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." These words shall be kept in their hearts, shall be taught their children, shall be spoken of at all times, and shall be bound on their foreheads and arms and written on their doorposts. Let them beware in their coming prosperity, in their enjoyment of cities and houses and wells and vineyards and olive trees, lest they forget the Lord who brought them out of the house of bondage. Let them not serve other gods, lest God in His anger utterly destroy them, but let them ever fear and serve the Lord their God.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The debts parents owe to children.

2. The reverence in which Moses is held by the Jews. At the World's Parliament of Religion, Rabbi Gottheil said: "I can not circumscribe the influence of Moses. I know not where it ends. Every Christian church on earth and every mosque is his monument. Peace is the foundation stone on which they all rest, and that cross over the church on which the Man is hung, which to the Christian is the symbol of Deity itself, is where He said that He must die that the law of Moses be fulfilled. And the Arabian's great master, Mohammed, is overflowing with praise when the son of Amram comes to his mind. Five hundred millions, at least, acknowledge him their master."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Did Moses wish to enter the Promised Land? (See Deut. 3.23–29.) 2. Why was Moses not allowed to enter? (Num. 20.1–12; 27.12–14.) 3. On what other special occasion was "The anger of the Lord kindled against Moses?" (Ex. 4.14.) 4. Read Num. 27.15–23 for further particulars in regard to the choice of Moses' successor. 5. The death of Moses recalls the translation of two others. Who were they? (Enoch and Elijah.) 6. By whom was Moses seen in New Testament times? (Matt. 17.1–8.) 7. What comments on Moses are made in Num. 12.3, 7; Deut. 34.10–12; Heb. 3.2? 8. What characteristic did he show as recorded in Num. 11.29; Ex. 34.29? What is he called in Deut. 33.1; 34.5; Josh. 1.1? 9. As Moses reviewed his past life what things do you think he would regret? What things would he remember with gratitude? 10. What rank do you think Moses holds among the men of the Bible?

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The remainder of this second address of Moses to the people is an earnest exhortation to obey the various statutes and ordinances.

THE DEATH OF MOSES

Deut. 34.1–12. (Read Deut. 31–34.) Commit vv. 10–12.

Golden Text

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Psa. 116.15.

LESSON TEXT Deuteronomy 34.1–12

1 And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that *is* over against Jericho: and the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,
2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,
3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.
4 And the Lord said unto him, This *is* the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see *it* with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.
5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.
6 And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.
7 And Moses *was* a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.
8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses were ended.
9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.
10 And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.
11 In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,
12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The mountain of Nebo, the top of Pisgah.* In Deut. 3.27 it is called Pisgah, and in Deut. 32.49 Nebo; evidently both names, as well as Abarim (32.49) refer to the same mountain. *Over against Jericho.* Fronting, east of Jericho. *Gilead unto Dan.* The East Jordan land; Gilead in the northern foreground, beyond it Dan near the foot of Mount Hermon.

2. The West Jordan land. *The utmost sea,* R. V., *the hinder sea;* the western sea, margin. The naming of the districts, as they afterwards were assigned to the different tribes, points to Joshua as the writer. *Schröder.*

3. *The south.* The South, the Negeb.

4. *Thou shalt not go over thither.* See Num. 20.12; 27.12–14.

6. *He buried him.* Margin of R. V., *he was buried.*

7. *His natural force abated.* Margin, *his moisture fled.* He was sound physically and mentally, in spite of his age and the hardships he had endured.

8. *Thirty days.* See Num. 20.29.

9. *For Moses laid his hands upon him.* See Num. 27.18, 23. *Hearkened.* Obeyed.

10. *Whom the Lord knew face to face.* The Lord revealed Himself to him.

12. *Shewed.* R. V., *wrought.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *And the Lord shewed him all the land.* Standing on the highest crest the prospect would, indeed, seem almost unbounded. Eastwards stretching into Arabia, rolls a boundless plain—one waving ocean of corn and grass. As the eye turns southwards, it ranges over the land of Moab, till it rests on the sharp outlines of Mounts Hor and Seir, and the rosy granite peaks of Arabia. To the west the land descends, terrace by terrace, to the Dead Sea, the western outline of which can be traced in its full extent. Deep below lies the sea "like a long strip of molten metal, with the sun mirrored on its surface, waving and undulating in its further edge, unseen in its eastern limits, as though poured from some deep cavern beneath." Beyond it would appear the site of Hebron, and as the eye traveled northwards, the sites of Bethlehem and of Jerusalem, on the one side the gap in the hills leading to Jericho, while on the other side, the rounded heights of Benjamin would be clearly visible. Turning northwards the eye follows the winding course of the Jordan from Jericho, the city of palm trees, up the stream. Looking across it, it rests on the rounded top of Mount Gerizim, beyond which the plain of Esdraelon opens, and the shoulder of Carmel appears. That blue haze in the distance is the line of the "utmost sea." Still farther northward rises the outlines of Tabor, Gilboa, the top of snow-clad Hermon, and the highest range of Lebanon. In front are the dark forests of Ajalon, Mount Gilead, then the land of Bashan and Bozrah. *Alfred Edersheim, Israel in Canaan.*

6. *And He buried him.* These are figurative expressions. We do not know the meaning of them—and yet we know it well. To the fancy that has been chastened by suffering, the picture is full of tenderness. God has buried much in His time; He has been the great grave-digger, He has filled up the tombs of the ages and written the epitaphs of æons. How He buried Moses we can never know; but having buried him, God knew where he was. The grave was as a foot-print to the Almighty. *Joseph Parker.*

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave.
And no man dug that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er;
For the angel of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there.

. . . . . .

And had he not high honor?
The hill-side for his pall;
To lie in state while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall;

And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave;
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave.

. . . . . .

Oh, lonely tomb in Moab's land,
Oh, dark Beth-peor's hill,
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace —
Ways that we can not tell;
He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
Of him He loved so well. *Mrs. C. F. Alexander.*

7. *Moses was one hundred and twenty years old.* An aged Saxon warrior gave this beautiful illustration of the length of human life. "The life of man on earth, in comparison to the unknown space, is like that which may happen in the winter season, when a fire is lighted and the room filled with the genial heat, while the whirlwind rages, and the snow falls outside, and the sparrow flutters quickly in at one door and flies hastily out at the other. It has dashed from the darkness of winter at one door into the darkness of winter in which it disappears at the other; such is the brief measure of life."

10. *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.* If you take into consideration the various departments in which he served, if you bear in mind his prophetic gifts, his leadership and generalship, his constructive power in legislation, his administrative talent, his literary, and poetic endowments, his is the greatest name — except the Name which is above every name — that ever dwelt upon the earth. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Moses built human pyramids, carved human obelisks; he took a poor shepherd family and created a nation from it, a great, eternal, holy people, a people of God, destined to outlive centuries, and to serve as a pattern to all other nations. *Heine.*

Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.

So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men. *Longfellow.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

8. *The days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.* Orientals are much more demonstrative in the signs of grief than natives of Western countries, as is evinced especially by what may be called its studied publicity, and the careful observance of the prescribed ceremonies. Thus Abraham, after the death of Sarah, came, as it were, in state, to mourn and weep for her. Job after his misfortunes, "arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground on the ashes"; and in like manner his friends

"rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads, and sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights," without speaking. *Biblical Encyclopædia.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The plains of Moab, paragraph 79; Nebo and Pisgah, paragraph 82; the land of Canaan divided among the tribes, paragraphs 129, 130; Zoar, paragraph 151; the location of Beth-peor is unknown.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Where were the first forty years of Moses' life spent? The next forty years? The last forty years? He has reached the age of one hundred and twenty, and though old in years, he is not old in feeling. What does the seventh verse say of him? We have followed him from his birth and hiding in the bulrushes of the Nile, his education and life at the Egyptian court, his shepherd life in the wilderness, his call by God to free the Israelites from their cruel bondage in Egypt, and then on through all those years in the wilderness when, with God's help, he labored to make of his people a nation that feared God and kept His commandments. Truly, he was "mighty in words and deeds." We have seen him go up Mount Sinai again and again alone, there to talk with God, and now we must follow him as he ascends Mount Nebo, there to end his life with God. He has taken leave of his people, his last words to them have been "a song" about the mercy and truth of God, and a blessing upon them, for it is God's will that he shall not enter with them the Promised Land. Their eyes must have followed him as he climbed upward toward Pisgah's top, till his figure was lost to their view. Then they must have still gazed upward in silent grief, while their long-time leader stood on the summit and gazed on the land of inheritance.

For Older Pupils. By common consent Moses is the most fascinating figure of Old Testament times. If the tides of affection run deep and strong toward this hero, it is because his manhood compels admiration, as surely as the moon compels the tides in their forward flow. Doubtless many elements of mind and heart combined to give this leader his unique place and influence. Men of morals admire Moses because he put the laws of right and wrong in form so clear that they still hold in all courts of justice. Men of faith revere him because he is the teacher of those who endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Men of intellect reverence Moses because of his many-sided greatness, for he is the one myriad-minded man. Practical men look up to him because by way of preëminence he is the man of achievement who gets things done; the natural king, as Carlyle said, who melts all wills into his. The story of his deeds is the most amazing story in the history of great men. *Newell Dwight Hillis,* in *Moses the Typical Hero and Leader.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of His Saints

How Beautiful to be with God. These are the words which are grave on

the marble marking the spot where Frances Willard rests. They are from the viewpoint of humanity, even as the words of our Golden Text are from the viewpoint of God.

"How beautiful to be with God
When earth is fading like a dream,
And from this mist-encircled shore
We launch upon the unknown stream!
No doubt, no fear, no anxious care,
But, comforted by staff and rod,
In the faith brightened hour of death
How beautiful to be with God!

"Then let it fade, this dream of earth,
When I have done my life work here,
Or long, or short, as seemeth best —
What matters, so God's will appear?
I will not fear to launch my bark
Upon the darkly rolling flood,
'Tis but to pierce the mist — and then
How beautiful to be with God!"

James Buckham, in *A Wayside Altar.*

The Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ. I always like to see a good picture: I do not know anything except a good book that does a man more good, and some years ago, when I was in Paris, I went to the Salon. One picture represented a man, a king, lying on his death-bed. He was just dead; his face had the appearance of life, and his servants, who a moment before would have flown at his word, were engaged in rifling his caskets and wardrobes. What do you think was the legend beneath? "William the Conqueror." Such a victory! Just a moment dead, and his own servants were spoiling him! Another picture represented a Man lying in a rocky tomb, also dead, but the angels were keeping watch, and to that tomb, now empty, all ages and all generations are coming. He was the Conqueror, and this is the victory given unto every man that is of Christ Jesus. . . .

Browning has nothing finer than *A Death in the Desert,* wherein he images the love of St. John to Jesus. No power is able to raise the apostle from his last sleep, neither words nor cordials. Then one has a sudden inspiration; he brings the Gospel and reads into the unconscious ear,

"I am the resurrection and the Life,"

with the effect of an instantaneous charm.

"Whereat he opened his eyes wide at once,
And sat up of himself and looked on us."

This man had leant so long on Jesus' bosom — some seventy years,— that at the very sound of His words the soul of Jesus' friend came from the shadow of death. It was the response of the flower of the race to Jesus. *John Watson.*

Sing an Easter Hymn. I will not pray for my dead; I will give thanks for them. I will bring a wreath to the sepulchre — a wreath of immortelles. I will sing an Easter hymn in the winter of the year. I will number the departed among the members of my household. I will say with the little girl by the grave-stone, "We are seven!" I will keep a place for the old chair in a corner of my heart. I will garner the old songs in the field of memory. I will

preserve the birthdays on the fly-leaf of the old Bible as anniversaries, not of the dead, but of the living. And when, within my house, I bend the knee in the moment alloted to prayer, I will not say, "Father, raise up my dead!" but, "Father, I bless Thy name, that my dead are raised already." *George Matheson.*

II One Soweth, Another Reapeth

The Children of Israel hearkened unto Joshua. Moses had been telling his people for forty years that they were to pass to a land of milk and honey which had been promised to their fathers. It was the thought of his life, it was the desire and the mission of his soul, having piloted the people so long and so far, to be permitted to introduce them into the promised land; and finally, when he stood over against that land, the Lord said unto him, "Thou shalt not go over." He is the prototype, the representative, of those noble men in every age, who wrought all their life long to pave the way for the success of those that came after them — of the men that laid right foundations; as Luther, who died without seeing the results of his labor; of men who perished on the scaffold to give liberty of thought to their fellow men, dying without beholding the change; of missionaries who planted the seeds of civilization and religion, but reaped none of the fruits of those seeds; of inventors who made valuable discoveries, and died poor that others might take what they had accomplished, and carry it out to success. The victory of one man is founded on the defeat of a predecessor, time and time again, in this life. *Beecher.*

There is a Cruelty that is Kindness. His hands had sown; others reaped the harvest of happiness. His hand had planted, another generation sat under the vine and the fig tree. Do you say that his life was a failure? That events were cruel in not allowing him to live in quietude and receive the plaudits of his people, and in a quiet old age enjoy to the full his honors? There is a cruelty that is kindness. Did not that cup of hemlock evoke the pity and love of the world for Socrates? If Savonarola could return, would he not give special gratitude for that fire kindled in the market-place that flashed his name and work over all the world? Did not that bullet lend Lincoln added power and influence, and make his fame speed on? . . . It is not necessary that patriot or parent or teacher should harvest his own sowing. All truth is immortal. God's work survives. The right example lives, and like a torch is passed from hand to hand. That which Moses did not see here he has seen from the heights beyond, and God has given him the reward for all his labors. *N. D. Hillis.*

The Reward is in the Doing. I have a friend who, for many years, was connected with the naval observatory in Washington. A couple of years ago, when he was retired, I said to him that I always looked upon an astronomer with a kind of awe,— he seemed to me to be so near to the Almighty, at His elbow seeing Him work, as it were, and my friend smiled.

"I have not looked through a telescope at a star in a dozen years," he said. "All the years I have been in the service, I have been carrying on certain calculations that were begun before I was a man, and that will go on years after I am dead. When they are finished at last, we shall know something worth knowing. Meanwhile, I and the rest of us have been but links in the long chain upon whose trusty work depends the final value of it all. That I have tried to do my part faithfully must be my reward."

What greater reward could any man ask than this,— to be a link, however

humble, in the chain which links our world of men with God's Kingdom on high, and helps prepare this earth for His coming in His own good time? *Jacob Riis.*

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matters I or they,
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said,
And life the sweeter made. *Whittier.*

III THEIR DEEDS LIVE AFTER THEM

He being Dead, yet speaketh.

"'Tis but the living who are dumb,
The voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,"

says Byron. The voice of Moses sounded on the hearts of the Israelites, and sounds, indeed, unto this day in the hearts of all who fear the Lord. It has been said that "America has been often led to victory by Washington since he died." Have not the words of Monroe — the Monroe Doctrine — gained in volume and force with every year since they were uttered? Are there not voices of the dead which influence the hearts of almost every one? Doctor Fairbairn has told this personal experience: "To my manhood there has become evident what was quite hidden from my youth; the most potent personal force in shaping my character and determining my work in life was that of a man I never saw, who died many years before I was born. But that man was familiar to me from childhood, his name was often on the lips of one who loved him as a daughter; his history, his sayings, his aspirations and conduct, as recalled and repeated through the medium of a filial reverence as tender as it was true, fell like rays of living sunlight upon the sensitive spirit of the boy, touched and possessed the imagination of the youth, helped to form the thought and purposes of the man."

What brings Enduring Fame. A nobleman, who was very anxious that his name should not be forgotten by future ages, thought he would secure lasting fame by having engraved on his tombstone the words, "Friend of Sir Phillip Sidney." We know Sir Phillip Sidney, but who has heard of his friend Lord Brook? What deeds of his own immortalize his name?

Mr. N. McGee Waters in a recent magazine thus comments on a hero who is rightly famed, Father Damien, the Belgian priest who gave his life to the leper colony on the island of Molokai:

"The lepers lived there without authority or moral restraint; there was no doctor among them; they all lived together in grass huts. There was no church on the island. Father Damien consoled the dying hours of two thousand lepers; he brought to them a church and a library; he built for them white-washed cottages, and showed them how to plant gardens; for eleven years he was the only clean man in all that crowd of rotting men. Then the disease smote him, and the sacrifice of the man was complete. After four long years of agony, to

use his own expression, he "toiled up his Golgotha." On a spring day in 1889 the welcome angel of death came. Many had never heard of him. But when he died every paper in the civilized world told the story of his life, and a wave of profound emotion stirred the hearts of the nations. Brave men wept; scholars and statesmen spoke in praise of the bravest man of the country. Wealth, war, learning, power, seemed to be but bubbles in the divine light that shone from that doomed grassy slope far away in the Pacific. You can not hide the man who serves. Self-sacrifice is sure certificate of greatness. When the millionaires and warriors of the nineteenth century are forgotten, the leper priest of Molokai will still lovingly be remembered on earth."

Evil Deeds live on. "Take my influence," cried a sinful man who was dying, "take my influence and bury it with me." He was going to be with Christ, his influence had been against him; he was leaving it behind. As a conspirator, called by some act of grace to his sovereign's table, remembers with unspeakable remorse the assassin whom he has left in ambuscade at his King's palace gates, so he recalls the traitorous years and the influences which will plot against his Lord when he is in eternity. Oh, it were worth being washed from sin, were it only to escape the possibility of a treachery like that. *Henry Drummond,* in *The Ideal Life.*

Our Work lives on. It is fitting that we should recognize the comforting fact that each one leaves his own little bit of work in the great edifice which God is rearing through the centuries, and which is to be at last for his own habitation through the Spirit. When Moses dies, God has Joshua fully trained to take his place; when Elijah steps into the chariot that is to take him to glory, God has Elisha there in readiness to receive his falling mantle; when Stephen is stoned to death, Paul is prepared by God to take up his mission. Thus, though the man disappears, his work is carried forward, and is, through the energizing influence of God's spirit, made operative through the ages. *William M. Taylor.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Death or life, each is God's. *Macdonald.*

To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die. *Campbell.*

Life's a reckoning we cannot make twice over. *George Eliot.*

Lift your glad voices in triumph on high
For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die. *Henry Ware.*

I have so ruled my life that when death come, I might face it without fear. *Henry Havelock.*

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time. *Longfellow.*

It is a high, solemn, almost awful thought for every individual man that his earthly influence, which has had a commencement, will never, through all the ages, were he the very meanest of us, have an end. *Carlyle.*

God marks how long this life shall be.
How grandly broad with reach of sympathy,
How high toward heaven its growth,— He leaves to thee!
Aldis Dunbar.

Looking calmly, but humbly, for that close of my mortal career which can not be far distant, I reverently thank God for the blessings vouchsafed to me in the past, and with an awe that is not fear, and a consciousness of demerit which does not exclude hope, await the opening before my steps of the gates to the eternal world. *Horace Greeley.*

Long life is denied us; therefore let us do something to show that we have lived. *Cicero.*

Yet do thy work, it shall succeed
In thine or in another's day;
And if denied the victor's meed,
Thou shalt not lack the toiler's pay. *Whittier.*

This life will mean more when we realize that it is the pathway to the next. *Ram's Horn.*

Character and capacity are all of life that we can take with us when death swings open the door from this into the next room in our Father's house. *Babcock.*

Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues. *George Eliot.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. John 11.26.

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Heb. 9.27.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. 1.21.

For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. Rom. 14.8.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Psa. 23.4.

I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. John 4.38.

The memory of the just is blessed. Prov. 10.7.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. 2 Tim. 4.7, 8.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

So live, that, when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, that moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not like the quarry-slave at night

Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one that draws the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams. *William C. Bryant.*

THE LESSON STORY

The writer of the last chapter of Deuteronomy calls Moses a prophet whom the Lord knew face to face, the greatest of all the prophets of Israel, and calls attention especially to the wonders wrought by God through him.

It was not God's will that this great leader should enter Canaan. Having brought the people within sight of their goal, and having given them his last blessing, Moses ascended Mount Nebo, there to die alone even as he had in reality in his greatness lived alone.

From Pisgah's top he was permitted to see the Promised Land, and his eyes beheld a wonderful panorama; gazing over Gilead and the land allotted to the tribe of Dan in the North, around to the possessions of the tribes in the northwest and west, and then to the South Land and the valley of Jericho nearer by. What were his thoughts as he stood there? Alfred de Vigny represents him as saying: —

"Let now some other stand 'twixt Thee and Thine!
Some other curb Thy wild steed, Israel.
I gladly make him heir to book and brazen rod.

. . . . . .

I am the Great: my feet tread nation's necks,
My hand holds generations in its will.
Alas, my Lord! I am great — I am alone:
Give me — ah, give me leave to sleep the sleep of earth!"

But the sacred record tells us that his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated. It was no hero weary of his battles that was seeking rest on Pisgah's top; rather was it the servant of the Lord who rejoiced to do his Master's bidding, and who died there according to the word of the Lord.

Thus in the land of Moab, "on this side Jordan's wave," the great leader died, the Exodus and the wanderings ended, Joshua took up his work, and the conquest of the Promised Land began.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is it not strange that the surest thing is the thing we forget most of all? While it is not wholesome to be always thinking of death, it is more unwholesome still never to let the contemplation of that end come into our calculations of the future, and to shape our lives in an obstinate blindness to what is the one certain fact which rises up through the whirling mists of the unknown future. *Alexander Maclaren.*

2. To go on till we are worn out, to begin a new labor for which we are unfitted by the past and by age, is nothing to be desired. To die when our memory will be unspoiled is better; to die when none can say, "He did not do that with the same power;" to die when what we were fitted to do has been well done — that is to be desired, not to be regretted. It was the happy fate of Moses. *Stopford A. Brooke.*

REVIEW

Read Psalm 90

Golden Text for the Quarter

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Psa. 103.8.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF EXODUS XVI TO JOSHUA I

Lesson I. On the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving Egypt, the Israelites encamp in the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai. "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt," they complain to Moses and Aaron; "for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Their murmurings are against God, not against them, answer Moses and Aaron. God has heard their complaints and has promised Moses to send them food. At evening the ground is covered with quails, and in the morning with small round things which they name manna. "This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat," Moses explains. It is to be gathered fresh every morning, but on the sixth day a double portion will last them for the seventh, on which no manna will fall.

At Rephidim, their next encampment, there is no water. Moses is directed by God to smite a rock at Meribah, and water gushes out that the complaining people may drink. Amalek comes to wage warfare against the Israelites at Rephidim, and Joshua is in command of the Israelite forces. We see Moses holding up his hand, with Aaron and Hur on either side helping him, for as long as he does this Joshua is successful in battle.

Next we find the Israelites encamped before Sinai, "The mount of God." Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brings Moses' wife and sons to him here and Moses follows his counsel to appoint others to aid him in judging the people. Bounds are set about the Mount to keep away the people, for amidst thunders and lightnings and awful portents the glory of Gods appears there to Moses.

Lesson II. The words of God are these: I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Lesson III. Honor thy father and thy mother. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Thou shalt not covet.

Moses remains on the Mount communing with God. The book of Exodus records laws and ordinances given for the government of the people, directions for building and furnishing the tabernacle, directions for the appointment and consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests, and laws regulating sacrifices.

Lesson IV. During his absence Moses has left Aaron and Hur in charge

of the camp at the foot of the mountain. He is gone so long that the people come to Aaron and demand that he make "gods to go before them," and Aaron yields to them. Bidding them bring their golden earrings, he fashions with them a golden calf; "These be thy gods, O Irsael, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," he tells them, and appoints a "feast to the Lord" on the morrow.

Moses comes down from the Mount bearing the tables on which are written the ten commandments, and when he sees the people dancing and making merry around their idol his anger so overmasters him that he throws down and breaks the tables of stone. He calls for those who are on the Lord's side and commands the sons of Levi, who respond, to fall upon the worst of the idolaters and slay them. Returning to the Mount, Moses intercedes for his people with God, who promises to be with them still, but punishment shall befall them.

The tables are renewed, and when Moses comes down with them from the Mount his face so shines after his long communion with God that the people are not able to look upon it. He asks for offerings for the tabernacle, which are so freely brought that more than enough is obtained.

Lesson V. The tabernacle and its furnishings have been completed, and now it is erected and anointed. In the holy of holies the ark is placed and hidden by the veil which separates this place from the holy place. In the holy place are the table of shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and the altar of incense. Before the tabernacle in the surrounding court, stands the laver and the altar of burnt-offering. Directions are given for the anointing of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. Then the tent is covered with a cloud, and the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle.

Directions are given for the burnt-offerings, the meat offering, the peace offering, the sin offering of ignorance, and the trespass offerings. Moses consecrates Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu to the priesthood, and they offer the sacrifices for themselves and for the people.

Lesson VI. Nadab and Abihu offer strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not, and they suddenly perish; at Moses' command their bodies are borne without the camp. "I will be sanctified by them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified," were the words of the Lord, Moses tells Aaron, and his sons but suffer the penalty for their disobedience. He commands Aaron not to show any signs of mourning; nor to leave the tabernacle, for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon him; he must not murmur at God's judgment. Aaron and his remaining sons are forbidden to drink wine or strong drink when they go into the tabernacle. They must have clear brains to distinguish between what is allowed and what is not allowed, and to teach the statutes of the Lord to the children of Israel.

The law of things holy and unholy, that is, of things which may be eaten and things which may not be eaten, and the laws for discerning leprosy and for purification are recorded.

Lesson VII. The death of Aaron's sons is followed by directions for the observance of the Day of Atonement. Two goats shall be presented before the door of the tabernacle for an atonement for the people. By casting lots Aaron shall decide which goat shall be sacrificed and which allowed to go free as the scapegoat. Arrayed in "holy garments," Aaron shall offer a bullock as an atonement for himself and his house, and shall enter the holy of holies and sprinkle its blood on the front side of the mercy-seat and also before

it, after having first burnt incense before the ark and concealed with its cloud the top of the mercy-seat. Then he shall slay the sacrificial goat and sprinkle its blood in the holy of holies as an atonement in behalf of the people. Then the blood of both bullock and goat shall be sprinkled in the holy place and on the brazen altar. Over the head of the live goat he shall confess the sins of the people, and then it shall be led forth into the wilderness.

In the remainder of the book of Leviticus various laws and ordinances are recorded, some of them repetitions, and the feasts of the Lord are proclaimed. Numbers gives the number of the tribes, the order of their tents, the charge of the Levites, and the offerings. The keeping of the passover is commanded again.

Lesson VIII. The Israelites leave Sinai in the second month of the second year, and advance to the wilderness of Paran. Moses asks Hobab, the Midianite, to accompany them, promising that they will do him good and he shall share in God's blessings, but Hobab says he will return to his country and his people. Then Moses asks him to go with them in order to do them good, to show them where and how to encamp. As the ark, the signal for the breaking of camp, is carried forward Moses chants: "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee;" and when it rests, the signal for the host to encamp, his words are, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."

At Taberah, the people complain and are punished by fire, and again at Kibroth-hattaavah they complain about their manna, and quails are given them in wrath which create a plague among them. At Hazeroth, Aaron and Miriam speak against Moses, and Miriam is afflicted with leprosy, but is healed at the prayer of Moses. They continue their journey to Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran.

Lesson IX. Moses selects a man from each tribe and sends them to visit Canaan and bring back a report in regard to its inhabitants, their cities, and the fruitfulness of the land. They return and on a staff borne by two men they bring a huge bunch of grapes, and they also bring pomegranates and figs. The land is indeed flowing with milk and honey, but the people are strong, and the cities are walled and great. This is the report of ten of the spies, from which Caleb and Joshua differ. Caleb advises that they go up and conquer the land at once, for they are well able. Then the other ten declare that "the land eateth up the inhabitants," and the people are veritable giants and the children of Israel but as grasshoppers in their sight.

Confusion reigns. The people weep and threaten to return to Egypt. Caleb and Joshua urge them to advance and possess the land, and the people are about to stone them when the glory of the Lord appears in the tabernacle. God offers to make of Moses a mighty nation and utterly destroy the Israelites, but Moses intercedes for them and obtains pardon, but their punishment shall be that they shall wander in the wilderness for forty years and all shall die there save Caleb and Joshua, who with those who are now children shall enter the Promised Land. The men who raised the evil report perish by a plague, and those who now seek to invade Canaan contrary to the Lord's command through Moses, are smitten by the Amalekites.

The rebellion of Korah, Datham and Abiram is punished, and a plague kills the thousands who murmur against Moses and Aaron. Aaron's rod,

among all the rods of the tribes, buds, and, like the pot of manna, is preserved in the ark. The charge to the priests and Levites and the Levite's portions are chronicled. The children of Israel come to the desert of Zin, where Miriam dies. Again comes the familiar cry for water, and Moses and Aaron are directed by God to "speak unto the rock and it shall give forth water," but Moses in vexation of spirit over the complaints of the people exclaims, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" and strikes it. The water comes forth abundantly, but Moses and Aaron hear these words of God: "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them!"

At Kadesh, Moses sends messengers to the king of Edom asking permission to pass through his land, but being refused, the Israelites are forced to turn and journey to Mount Hor, where Aaron dies and his son Eleazar succeeds him.

Lesson X. With some loss on their part, the Israelites battle with the King of Arad at Hormah and destroy the Canaanites. Journeying from Mount Hor by way of the Red Sea in order to go around the land of Edom, the people are greatly discouraged, and their murmurings against Moses and against God are punished by a plague of serpents. The people repent, and, acknowledging that they have sinned, beg Moses to intercede with God for them. Moses is directed to erect a brazen serpent on a standard, and those who are bitten by a serpent and look up to it with faith are healed.

In the course of their journeys the Israelites are attacked by Sihon, King of the Amorites, and defeat him and take his cities. They take up their abode in the land of the Amorites, and overcome Og, the King of Bashan, who advances against them. While they encamp in the plains of Moab Balak sends for Balaam and commands him to curse the Israelites, but he prophesies their success.

The people are numbered in the plains of Moab. Moses is warned of his approaching death, and asking for a successor is told that Joshua shall take his place. The Midianites are killed, and their families and possessions taken. The tribes of Reuben and Gad ask that they may receive their inheritance on the east of the Jordan, and upon agreeing to go with the other tribes and help conquer Canaan Moses assigns to them the coveted land and they conquer it. The thirty-third chapter of Numbers chronicles the two and forty journeys of the Israelites in the wilderness. Forty-eight cities are to be given the Levites, cities of refuge are to be appointed. The early chapters of Deuteronomy record Moses' speech to the children of Israel in the eleventh month of the fortieth year of their wilderness life, in which he briefly recounts their past history.

Lesson XI. Having rehearsed the giving of the commandments and statutes, Moses pleads with the children of Israel to obey them. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," he tells them, and these words of God shall be taught their children, they shall be "as frontlets between the eyes," shall be bound upon their hands, and written upon their doorposts. When they enter and possess the land, let them beware lest they forget the Lord, but serve and fear Him only.

Moses continues to exhort the people to keep themselves free from idols, and to obey God. He rehearses their many rebellions and recounts God's mercies to them. He encourages Joshua, and delivers the book of the Law into the keeping of the Israelites. The song of Moses proclaims God's mercy and vengeance. Now comes God's message to him to ascend Mount Nebo and behold the inheritance of the children of Israel in Canaan, for there he is to die. He closes his life with his loved people by uttering a prophetical blessing upon them.

Lesson XII. At the age of one hundred and twenty years, with strength unabated, Moses ascends Mount Nebo. From its summit he beholds all the land promised by God to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. There by the hand of God he dies and "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." For thirty days the children of Israel mourn for him. Joshua, his successor, is full of the spirit of wisdom, and the people listen to him and obey him as commanded, but there has not since arisen "a prophet like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

A WORD PICTURE REVIEW FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

Lesson I. I see a great many tents and a very large company of people looking down at the ground and then at one another with very astonished faces.

Lessons II and III. On a level plain surrounded by high mountains there is another camping scene. The people are all gathered at the foot of a mountain around which lightnings are flashing and thunder is rolling. Now a man stands before them and all are listening eagerly. What words are they hearing?

Lesson IV. The plain and the mountain are the same as in the last scene, but the people are dancing and singing around some kind of figure which glitters in the sunlight, and coming down the mountain there is a man who is in the act of throwing something upon the ground.

Lesson V. The same company of people is gathered around an enclosed space. Looking down into the place from which they are shut out I see something which looks like a tent; in front of it there is a round basin of copper on a copper pedestal and another object of copper which is square and has something on each corner which looks like horns.

Lesson VI. There is great confusion in this scene. The people are within that enclosed place which we saw in the last scene. Through the gate comes a procession; young men are carrying two white-robed figures, and an immense crowd is following them.

Lesson VII. First I see an old man clad in white garments standing at the door of a tent, and in front of him are two goats and a great crowd of people. Again I see him coming out of the tent and going to an altar in the court, which he sprinkles with something. Now he is standing with his hands on the head of a goat in the midst of the people.

Lesson VIII. There is a great company of people on foot, men and women and children, and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats. As far as one can see in either direction they extend, and all are slowly moving onward, and looking often toward a cloud which seems to go on before them.

Lesson IX. Here is a group of men talking to a great crowd of people;

now they are through and a man who has been standing near talks very earnestly, but before he finishes the other men begin talking and the crowd is growing more and more excited.

Lesson X. The same throng of people are in a place where there is nothing but sand and rocks. Great numbers of them are lying on the sand and seem to be suffering terribly. Over here there is such a crowd that we can not distinguish one from another, but they all seem to be looking up at a glittering object above their heads.

Lesson XI. This is a very quiet scene. An aged man is talking earnestly and solemnly, and the people all are listening with sober faces.

Lesson XII. On the top of a high mountain a lonely figure is standing. It is the same grand old man whom we have seen in all the other scenes, and he is gazing off in the distance with a very thoughtful, yet happy face. Down at the foot of the mountain the people are weeping.

OUTLINE OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS

I. God's Care in the Wilderness.
   1. The Giving of Manna.
II. The Giving of the Law.
   2. Duties toward God.
   3. Duties toward Men.
   5. The Tabernacle.
   6. Worship God Rightly.
   7. Day of Atonement.
III. The March toward Canaan.
   8. Guidance on the Way.
   9. Turning away from Canaan.
   10. Merited Suffering on the Way.
   11. Good Counsel.
   12. The Leader's Death.

A BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Titles	Outlines	Lessons
1. God feeds Israel in the Wilderness.	Bitter murmuring. Bidding of God Bread from heaven.	Christ is the Christian's living bread that came down from heaven.
2. The Ten Commandments; Duties towards God.	No other gods. No graven image. No vain use of God's name. No Sabbath desecration.	Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart.

3. The Ten Commandments; Duties towards Men.	Concede honor to parents. Commit no murder, adultery, theft. Charge no one falsely. Covet not.	Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
4. The Golden Calf.	Golden calf. Great sin. Grievous punishment. Generous pleading.	Worship not idols but worship God, who is a Spirit, wholly and willingly.
5. The Tabernacle.	Ark of testimony. All the Tabernacle. Anointed by the priest.	We find our way into the holy place with the help of Christ who is our mediator.
6. The Sin of Nadab and Abihu.	Suspicious cloud. Strange fire. Sudden death. Strong drink.	Drink causes disgrace, disease and death.
7. The Day of Atonement.	Sin offerings. Seeking atonement. Scapegoat.	Salvation is secured through the sacrifice of Christ.
8. Israel Journeying to Canaan.	Going onward. Guide sought. Guiding ark.	God is the guide and the guard of life's journey.
9. The Two Reports of the Spies.	Commission of spies. Cowardly report. Courageous report.	Fear no foe for the Lord will fight for you.
10. The Brazen Serpent.	Successful battle. Sin of murmuring. Serpents sent. Seeing with faith.	Every one that earnestly believes in the Exalted Christ shall have Eternal life.
11. Moses Pleading with Israel.	Fear the Lord. Fervent love. Faithful teaching. Forget Him not.	Thou shalt trust and love and thank and serve the Lord thy God.
12. The Death of Moses.	Distant view. Death of Moses. Discreet successor.	This life is but the pathway to the next.

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

What were some of the troubles of the Israelites on their journey? How

did God provide food for them? How often did they gather it? What did they do on the sixth and on the seventh day which was different from what they did on other days? Why?

What is the first commandment? The second? The third? The fourth? All these commandments refer to our duty to whom?

What is the fifth commandment? The sixth? The seventh? The eighth? The ninth? The tenth? These commandments are in regard to our duty to whom?

While Moses was on Mount Sinai what commandment did the people break? How did they get their golden calf? What did Moses do when he saw their idolatry? How did he punish them? What did he say in his pleading with God for them?

What were the names of the two parts of the tabernacle? What was in the most holy place? Who could enter this place? How often? What was in the holy place? What was in the court that surrounded the tabernacle? What was the signal for the march of the Israelites? What was the signal for their encampment?

Who was the high priest of the Israelites during the first part of their life in the wilderness? What did two of his sons do which was not right? How were they punished? What did Moses forbid Aaron to do? Why? What other command did Aaron receive? Why?

What animal did Aaron sacrifice for himself on the Day of Atonement? What animal for the people? Where did he sprinkle the blood? What did Aaron confess with his hands on the live goat? What became of this goat? What did this ceremony mean to the people?

Whom did Moses wish to have to go with him on the way to Canaan? What reason did Moses give? What was Hobab's answer? What different reason did Moses then give? How far ahead did the ark go when the Israelites went from one camping place to another?

How many spies were sent into Canaan? How were they chosen? What did they bring back with them? What did most of the spies say about the land and the people? What did Caleb advise? Whose advice suited the people? What were they now obliged to do? What was to be their fate?

When did the Israelites first receive their manna? When they complained of this food what was their punishment? How were they healed?

Of what did Moses, shortly before his death, tell the people they must beware? How were they to keep the words of God in remembrance? What special sin were they in danger of?

Why was not Moses allowed to enter the Promised Land? How old was he when he died? Where did he die? Who was with him? Who took his place?

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS

Describe the course of the Israelites from Egypt to Sinai. What can you tell about the gathering, preparing, and keeping of the manna? How did the giving of the manna "prove" the people? What memorial of it was kept? How did the Israelites live in the wilderness?

Narrate the circumstances under which the ten commandments were given. What does the word *Decalogue* mean? Repeat the Ten Commandments.

What is the distinctive difference between the first and the second commandments? What does the phrase "I am a jealous God" mean? What does the second commandment forbid? What is "the first commandment with promise"? What was Christ's comment on the sixth commandment? How did He answer the question as to which was the great commandment?

What was the character of Aaron? Is there any excuse to offer for him or for the people for the making and worshiping of the golden calf? Why did they give this form to their idol?

Describe the tabernacle and its contents. Of whom was it a type?

What was the sin of Nadab and Abihu? Why was the penalty inflicted on them necessary? What other people in the Bible were punished as examples to others?

Describe the acts of Aaron on the Day of Atonement. What did the ceremony with the scape-goat symbolize? What did the Day of Atonement prefigure?

How long did the Israelites remain at Sinai? How was the tabernacle prepared for a journey? What arguments did Moses use to induce Hobab to accompany him? Did Hobab yield to his entreaties? What were the chief events along the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea?

Why did Moses send out the spies when he had been directed by God to enter and possess the land? Why did Caleb give counsel the opposite of that of the other spies? What did the people do after the two reports? Why were the people not ready to enter Canaan? What was their punishment?

Where did Aaron die and who was his successor? Why was he not allowed to enter the Promised Land? Why were the Israelites forced to go around the land of Edom? How many murmurings of the children of Israel can you recall? What became of the brazen serpent?

What two powerful kings did the Israelites conquer when on their way around the land of Edom? Where was their last camping place before reaching the Jordan? What land did two and a half tribes choose for their inheritance? On what condition was it given them? Among Moses' last words to his people what did he say about not forgetting God?

Why was not Moses permitted to enter Canaan? Had he finished his great work? Was death to him an evil? What qualifications had Joshua for being Moses' successor?

SUBJECTS FOR WRITTEN REVIEW

The Contents and Character of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

The Way in which the Words of the Golden Text for the Quarter are illustrated in each Lesson.

An Appreciation of Moses.

A Description of the Tabernacle and its Contents.

An Account of the Day of Atonement.

The Far-Reaching Meanings of the Decalogue.

The Twelve Lesson Stories briefly told in your Own Words.

A Treatment of the Most Helpful Truth gained from the Quarter's Study.

A GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

Give the boundaries of the Sinai Peninsula. Describe the surface of the southern section. Of the northern section. Locate Mount Sinai. Name the deserts. What were the products of the peninsula? What evidences of inhabitants?

Describe the course of the Israelites from Egypt to Sinai. What happened at Marah? What did they find at Elim? What happened in the vicinity of Rephidim? How long did they remain before Mount Sinai? Describe Mount Sinai and its surroundings. What happened here?

What events are recorded at Hazeroth? Where was Kadesh? How long was this probably the headquarters of the Israelites? What happened meanwhile? Describe the route from Kadesh to the plains of Moab. Why did they not go directly from Kadesh around the Salt Sea to Moab? Who dwelt in Edom? What happened at Mount Hor? What took place near the River Arnon? Where did the Israelites encamp in sight of Canaan? What victories did they win east of the Jordan? How was this land allotted?

Draw a map of the peninsula of Sinai and trace upon it the probable course of the Israelites from the crossing of the Red Sea to the camp opposite Jericho.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Look up these references to Joshua's life before the death of Moses: Ex. 17.8–16; 18.9; 24.13; 32.17; 33.11; Num. 11.28; 13.16; 14.6–9; 27.18; 31.7, 8; 34.17; Deut. 1.38; 3.28; 34.9. 2. What qualities essential in a leader has he shown? 3. When was he chosen as Moses' successor? (Num 27.15–23; Deut. 31.7, 8.) 4. What does "Moses' minister" mean? 5. When was he given the high title of "the servant of God"? (Josh. 24.29). 6. How many times in the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy have the words "Be of good courage" been repeated? 7. Read Psalms 27 and 46. 8. In what words have the limits of Canaan been given before this? (Gen. 15.18; Ex. 23.31; Num. 34.1–12; Deut. 11.24.) 9. When do we first hear of the Hittites? (Gen. 23.3–20.)

FOURTH QUARTER

LESSON I — OCTOBER 6

JOSHUA, ISRAEL'S NEW LEADER

Joshua 1.1–11. (Read Num. 27.12–23; Joshua 1.) Commit v. 7.

Golden Text

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Joshua 1.5.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 1.1–11

1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The servant of the Lord.* The one by whom God issued His orders, and by whom He accomplished all His purposes and designs. His prime minister. *Clarke. Moses' minister.* His attendant.

3. *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon.* See Deut. 11.24.

4. *From the wilderness.* On the south. *This Lebanon.* On the north. *The land of the Hittites.* "Their land may at times have comprehended all

this territory, according to traces of their greatness in the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments." It is probable that the term Hittites here includes all the people of Canaan. *The great sea.* The Mediterranean. *Your coast.* R. V., *your border.* The Israelites did not possess the full extent of this territory till the days of David, and then only for a short time. "Like all the promises, it was contingent on conditions, and Israel's unfaithfulness cut short its extent of territory." *Maclaren.*

5. *I will not fail thee.* Words previously spoken by Moses to Joshua and the people. Deut. 31 .6–8.

6. *Unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land.* R. V., *thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land.*

7. Compare Psa. 1 .2, 3. *Prosper.* Margin, *do wisely;* R. V., *have good success.*

8. *This book of the law.* See Deut. 31 .9–13.

10. *Officers.* See Num. 11 .16.

11. *The host.* R. V., *the midst of the camp. Prepare you victuals.* See Josh. 5 .12.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

1. *Joshua.* His original name Hoshea, "Salvation," transformed into Jehoshua, or Joshua, "God's salvation"; and this, according to the modifications which Hebrew names underwent in their passage through the Greek language, took, in the latter ages of the Jewish Church, sometimes the form of Jason, but more frequently that which has been indelibly impressed upon history as the greatest of all names,—Jesus. The first Joshua was to save his people from their actual foes. The second was to "save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1 .21.) *Stanley,* in *"History of the Jewish Church."*

1. *Moses' minister.* Joshua had been content to be Moses' minister, satisfied to wait below while his master passed into the cloud to hold fellowship with God; staying in the tent to serve Moses if he were required, or in his absence to guard its contents; jealous for his master's honor, when Eldad and Medad prophesied; glad that all the glories of the conquest of Eastern Palestine decked with laurels the closing days of the great leader.

The thought of succeeding Moses seems never to have presented itself to his mind. Indeed, Moses himself does not appear to have thought of him in this direction; for we learn that he besought the Lord to appoint a man over the congregation, that they should not be as sheep without a shepherd. (Num. 27 .17.) In that prayer Joshua may have joined, thinking all the while that Caleb, the lion-hearted, or Phinehas the priest, or one of the sons of Moses, might take his place; but not supposing that he would himself be called to it. His one aim had been to enhance the glory and lighten the cares of Moses; and he was too absorbed in his master's personality to be greatly conscious of his own. When, therefore, the call came to him to assume the office which Moses was vacating, his heart failed him, and he needed every kind of encouragement and stimulus, both from God and man. *F. B. Meyer,* in *Joshua and the Land of Promise.*

5. *As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.* Never, in the history of the chosen people, could have been such a blank as that when they became conscious that "Moses the servant of the Lord was dead." He who had

been their leader, their lawgiver, their oracle, as far back as their memory could reach, was taken from them at the very moment when they seemed most to need him. It was to fill up this blank that Joshua was called. The narrative labors to impress upon us the sense that the continuity of the nation and of its high purpose was not broken by the change of person and situation. "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." There was, indeed, as yet, no hereditary or fixed succession. *Dean Stanley.*

6. *Be strong and of good courage.* Joshua was a simple, straighforward, undaunted soldier. His first appearance is in battle. "Choose out men, go fight with Amalek." He is always known by the spear, or javelin, slung between his shoulders or stretched out in his hand. The one quality which is required of him, and described in him, is that he was "very courageous." "He was strong and of good courage." "He was not afraid nor dismayed." He turned neither to the right hand nor to the left; but at the head of the hosts of Israel he went right forward from Jordan to Jericho, from Jericho to Ai, from Ai to Gibeon, to Beth-horon, to Merom. He wavered not for a moment; he was here, he was there, he was everywhere, as the emergency called for him. He had no words of wisdom, except those which shrewd common sense and public spirit dictated. To him the divine revelation was made, not in the burning bush nor in the still small voice, but as "the Captain of the Lord's host, with a drawn sword in his hand;" and that drawn and glittering sword was the vision which went before him through the land till all the kings of Canaan were subdued beneath his feet. *Stanley,* in *History of Jewish Church.*

8. *The book of the law.*

We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read. *Whittier.*

8. *Observe to do according to all that is written therein.* If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one per cent. of the human race. It suggests a nebulous, dim puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way.

Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning, are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, but beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling

of his alert and aggressive mind. What is the secret of his immortality? *Mark Twain,* in *Harper's Monthly.*

The answer to Mark Twain's question is thus given in *Trusting and Toiling:*—"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever." (Jer. 31.35, 36.)

8. *Then thou shalt have good success.* Good success—what does that mean? Does it imply that there is a kind of success which is not good? Certainly there is such a thing; there are forms of success which strike the vulgar eye, but are spurious. But what is good success? Have you thought about this? What things, if you win them, will make life a success, and if you miss them, will make it a failure? I believe it is a good thing when you are studying this problem to transport yourself by an effort of the imagination from the beginning of life, where you actually stand, to the end of life, where you will be some day, with your life behind you completed, and with a great white throne in front of you. If you were standing in that position, what would be the things which, if you had gained them, would entitle you to consider your life a success, and, if you had missed them, would compel you to think it a failure? *James Stalker.*

The Book of the Law. From the Fifteenth Century in the British Museum.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Shittim, paragraph 79; review of geography lesson of Palestine, paragraphs 83–88.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When Queen Victoria had died and King Edward VII was crowned in Westminster Abbey, this first chapter of the book of Joshua was read because it gives good counsel to a ruler who is just begin-

ning his work as Joshua was beginning his, but its counsel is for every one, whether he has a kingdom or only himself to rule.

For Older Pupils. Many writers group together the first six books of the Bible and call them the Hexateuch (six books), instead of taking the first five books by themselves as the Pentateuch (five books); there is no break between the history of the last chapter of the book of Deuteronomy and the first chapter of the book of Joshua. The book of Joshua begins with the Israelites in their camp east of the river Jordan, which they were about to cross. Their new leader, Joshua, had lived in Egypt; he had crossed the Red Sea; he had been with the people in all their wilderness life; he had known Moses as a friend and superior; he had seen how Moses lived ever in the presence of God; he had gone part way up Mount Sinai with Moses, and when he came down bearing the tables containing the Ten Commandments he had awaited him to tell him of the idolatry into which the people had fallen; he had been one of the spies who entered Canaan thirty-eight years before this to spy out the land; and he had been appointed by Moses as his successor.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I I WILL NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE

Cover my Defenseless Head. It was Sunday evening on board an ocean steamer, and the passengers had met in the cabin to sing hymns. One gentleman, hearing a very rich and beautiful voice behind him and having his memory stirred by it, turned round suddenly, and asked the singer if he had been in the Civil War.

"Yes," was the answer. "I was a Confederate soldier."

"Were you at ——— on a certain night?"

"Yes, and a curious thing happened that night. The hymn recalls it to my mind. I was posted near the edge of a wood, on sentry duty. It was dark and cold, and about midnight, when everything was still, I found myself homesick, tired and afraid. To comfort myself I began to sing this hymn:

"'All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing,'

"It brought me into a better frame of mind. Peace came down upon me, and all the rest of that long night I felt no more fear."

"Now," said the other man, "listen to my story. I was a Union soldier and I was in the woods that night with a party of scouts. I saw you. My men had their rifles focused upon you. They were awaiting the word to fire. But when you sang

"'Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing,'

"I said, 'Boys, lower your rifles. We'll go home.'" *Pittsburg Gazette.*

God's Promises. When you find that a man is in the habit of keeping his word you are inclined to believe that he will be true to his promises which are not yet fulfilled. If he proposes certain principles and acts upon them, you think that they are really his. If he gives you an account of certain things which is manifestly natural and unstudied you are inclined to receive it

with more confidence than if it had an artificial air. If he speaks freely and candidly, without mental reserve and secret evasion, you are favorably disposed toward him and take him for a man of truth. Now it seems to me that all these traits are clearly marked in the Scriptures, which profess to bring us the revelation of the character and will of the living God. *Henry van Dyke.*

God's Presence in Trial. It is in the day of trial and difficulty that the soul experiences something of the deep and untold blessedness of being able to count on God. Were all to go on smoothly, this would not be so. It is not in gliding along the surface of a tranquil lake the reality of the Master's presence is felt; but actually when the tempest roars, and the waves roll over the ship. The Lord does not hold out to us the prospect of exemption from trial and tribulation; quite the opposite: He tells us we shall have to meet both the one and the other; but He promises to be with us in them, and this is infinitely better. God's presence in the trial is much better than exemption from the trial. *C. H. Mackintosh,* in *Notes on Exodus.*

II Turn not from it to the Right Hand or to the Left

There is only One Right Path. When one must make a moral decision he comes not only to the parting of two ways, one of which is the absolutely right path and the other of which is the absolutely wrong one, but he sees between the two various other paths as well. Perhaps the right path looks too difficult to him and from the wrong one he recoils; he chooses a path that seemingly runs almost in the same direction as the right path, but really branches farther and farther off from it, and in the end is the broad road that leadeth to destruction.

"In the journey of life, stand upright and move straight forward," counsels J. I. Boswell. "Avoid in morals the spinal curvature, which is neither healthful nor graceful. Keep in the straight path, and as it is a narrow one keep in the center of it, for the home to be reached is worth the toil and the struggle to reach it."

General Gordon, the martyr of Khartum, wrote from the Sudan to a friend: "The main point in life is to be just and straightforward; to fear no one, or no one's sayings; to avoid all tergiversation or twisting, if you lose by it.

The Harm of Deviation. There are those who say: "I will not lie; but I will take every advantage I can, just outside of lying." And they run their line of life so near to deceit that it is equivocal. It is very difficult to tell, sometimes, which side of the line they are on. They are conscientious in this. They say, "I do not mean to lie. I mean to take care." But they go so near that the least joggle of the wheel, if they run over an unexpected stone, throws them over the line.

Little lies are seeds of great ones. Little cruelties are germs of great ones. Little treacheries are like small holes in raiment, the beginnings of large ones. Little dishonesties are like the drops that work through the banks of the levee; a drop is an engineer, it tunnels a way for its fellows, and they, rushing, prepare for all behind them. A worm in a ship's plank proves, in time, worse than a cannon ball. The whole truth comes to this: human life can not be sound without the presence of a sober and robust conscience in all its parts. A series of minute derelictions, long-continued, though of comparatively little consequence in the result of each upon the apparent life,

are of incalculable influence upon the interior life, in their sum and final result. They deteriorate conscience itself. They injure its tone and sensibility. Human conduct works in two ways. As the cannon that sends the missile far across the field to damage the enemy also springs back, and by recoil violently strains the gun-carriage, and even injures those that stand heedlessly near, so to our actions there is not only a spring outward, but a rebound back. A great many men attempt to judge whether a thing is right or wrong simply by what they see that it does. Now the least part of a man's action is that which he can see in its immediate consequences. There are many courses of conduct in which the results before a man's face are indifferent, or perhaps partially good, but in which the reactive influence, the recoil upon the man's own constitution and nature, is morally fatal. And in estimating what is right and what is wrong we are to take into account this double action — the effect which a man's thoughts, and feelings, and judgments, and conditions have upon his own moral nature, as well as upon his fellows and upon the state of society. The little transgressions in which men indulge, though they have no power upon the settled course of human affairs, even if they are swept out into a current of public sentiment that carries them down as leaves are carried by the Amazon, are not harmless nor indifferent, because, aside from the influence of minor delinquencies upon the sum of affairs outwardly, there is another history and record, namely, their influence upon the actor. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

III Thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night

It is Thinking that makes what we read Ours. Andrew Bonar tells of a simple Christian in a farmhouse who had "meditated the Bible through three times." This is precisely what the Psalmist had done; he had gone past reading into meditation. Like Luther, he "had shaken every tree in God's garden, and gathered fruit therefrom." The idea of meditation is "to get into the middle of a thing." Meditation is to the mind what digestion is to the body. Unless the food is digested, the body receives no benefit from it. If we would derive the fullest benefit from what we read or hear, there must be that mental digestion known as meditation. If we would "buy the truth" we must pay the price which Paul intimates when he wrote to Timothy: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them." *G. B. F. Hallock.*

They that have read about everything are thought to understand everything, too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with the materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections — we must chew them over again. *Channing.*

Oriental Examples. More than one of the Hindu visitors at Cambridge confided to me that the sight of our faces, all contracted as they are with the habitual American over-intensity and anxiety of expression, made on him a very painful impression. "I do not see," said one, "how it is possible for you to live as you do, without a single minute in your day deliberately given to tranquillity and meditation. It is an invariable part of our Hindu life to retire for at least half an hour daily into silence, to relax our muscles, to govern our breathing, and to meditate on eternal things. Every Hindu child is trained to this habit from a very early age." *William James.*

The Hebrew sitting with crossed hands at the door of his tent, looking over the camp at rest and the desert beyond, was forced to think of his relation to the Holy One who had freed him from Egypt and was leading him through the desert to the promised land. In the rush of our modern life the need is not less that man should at times stop his work lest he come to think that the work is part, even the whole of himself. *Frederick S. Schenk.*

Third Draughts. Saint Augustine, in comparing the Bible to the water of life, says that "There are first draughts, and second draughts, and third draughts of this water to be enjoyed." The reason that so many do not enjoy the word of God is because they take only the first draught, and even in drinking this they are not thinking only of what they are enjoying. How often Jesus quoted the Scriptures, how He meditated upon them, and made them part of His very life — and surely if any one could do without help it was He! "How precious are thy thoughts with me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" says the Psalmist, who could only say this because he also said, "Thy law is my meditation all the day."

Victor Hugo has told about a father who left a trunkful of letters and papers in regard to the French Revolution for his son, who was but a child when he died, and how that boy when he grew up to manhood read those letters over and over till his heart glowed with love for his patriotic father and for his fatherland. We need to read our Father's words to us in the same whole-hearted way, and then we shall delight in them as perhaps we do not now.

In the highest part of Hongkong during three months of the year a damp fog settles and deposits a blue mold over everything that is not used daily. Would there be any mold on your Bible if you were there?

SENTENCE SERMONS

The fault of the age is too much reading and too little thinking. *President Gilman of John Hopkins.*

Apply thyself wholly to the text; apply the text wholly to thyself. *Bengel.*

If you fear, cast all your care on God;
That anchor holds. *Tennyson.*

Make it the first morning business of your life to understand some portion of the Bible clearly; and your daily business to obey it in all you do understand. *Ruskin.*

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care. *Whittier.*

As we hold a candle to the flame until it is fully lighted, so we must hold ourselves to Christ and His Word by meditation. *Bengel.*

Let no man out of a weak conceit of sobriety, or an ill-applied moderation, think or maintain that any man can search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's word. *Bacon.*

It is not the number of books you read, nor the amount of religious conversation with which you mingle, but it is the frequency and earnestness with which you meditate on these things, till truths which may be in them become part of your own being, that insures spiritual growth. *F. W. Robertson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The law of the Lord is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. Psa. 37.31.

Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Heb. 13.5.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Psa. 77.12.

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1 Pet. 5.7.

Men shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matt. 4.4.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4.8.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Happy and strong and brave shall we be, — able to endure all things, and to do all things — if we believe that every day, every hour, every moment of our life is in His hands. *Henry van Dyke.*

THE LESSON STORY

On the marble tablet in Westminster Abbey bearing the portraits of John and Charles Wesley is this inscription: "God buries the workers, but carries on the work." Moses the servant of the Lord was dead, but through Joshua God carried on the work. Joshua was a soldier, he knew how to obey, hence he was fit to command others. To him came the word of the Lord that the Israelites must go over the Jordan and possess the land promised to them, for wherever they went, from the wilderness on the south to Mount Lebanon on the north, and from the Euphrates on the east to the Great Sea on the west, the land should be theirs as had been promised to Moses. As God had been with Moses, so He should be with Joshua, but, like all God's promises, this promise had a condition attached to it; Joshua on his part must wholly obey the law, he must not turn from it in any instance, he must meditate upon it constantly in order that he might do as it commanded, only then would he prosper. "Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest," were the words of assurance to Joshua. He at once assumed command. His officers he directed to go throughout the camp and announce to the people that in three days they should cross the Jordan, and food must be prepared for their march. The tribes of Reuben and Dan and the half tribe of Manasseh, who had been allotted land east of the Jordan, Joshua reminded of their promise to Moses that they would go with the rest and aid in the conquest of Canaan, and they promised obedience to all his commands.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Most of us suppose we have some little plot of time railed off for God morning and evening, but how often does it get trodden down by the profane

multitude of this world's cares, and quite occupied by encroaching secular engagements. . . . What we all need above all things is to let the mind dwell on divine things — to be able to sit down knowing that we have so much clear time in which we shall not be disturbed, and during which we shall think directly under God's eye — to get quite rid of the feeling of getting through with something so that without distraction the soul may take a deliberate survey of its own matters. *Marcus Dods.*

2. The varying verdicts about the Bible. The earliest generation of Christians received the Old Testament as a sacred heritage, safeguarded as with walls of fire by the Jewish people; the books of the New Testament were as yet regarded as the writings of the friends of the Lord rather than as holy Scripture. The third century saw the development of Canonical theory, and the elevation of the completed book to the seat of authority. The middle ages regarded the Book as the very word of God, and yet subjected it to such fantastic and mystical interpretations as left it but scanty elements of reality. The Reformers discovered it afresh, searched it with the passion of seekers after hidden treasure, and fearlessly pronounced upon the relative value of its different parts. The post-reformation divines, confronted with the claim of an infallible Church, fell back for defense upon the dogma of an infallible book, and unhappily in many instances carried that dogma to extremes and untenable lengths. The critical movement has reasserted the position of the Reformers as to the right of free inquiry and has revealed the groundlessness of the fears formerly expressed regarding the disastrous results of such investigation. Yet in all these times and by all these varying interpretations of the truth, the Bible has been held as the Word of God in the unique and authoritative sense in which the claim can be made for no other book. *H. L. Willett,* in *Homiletic Review.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Why had not the Israelites entered Canaan thirty-eight years earlier? (Deut. 1.26–40.) 2. What memorial of the passage of the Jordan? (Josh. 4.1–7.) 3. Where did the people encamp? (Josh. 4.19.) 4. What sacrificial feast did they observe? (Josh. 5.10.) 5. What change in their living now took place? (Josh. 5.11, 12.) 6. Read the 114th Psalm. 7. Describe the crossing of the Red Sea. (Ex. 14.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The city of Jericho must be conquered after crossing the Jordan, and Joshua sent two spies to learn the strength of the city. They were hid by Rahab under the flax that was spread out on the roof of her house when the King of Jericho, learning of their visit to the city, sent men to take them. Rahab told the men they had gone to the Jordan and might be overtaken. After telling the spies that all the city were in terror of the Israelites,— "for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and in earth beneath," — Rahab made them promise to save her and her household when they took the city. Then she let them down over the wall of the city on which her house was built, and they returned to camp and reported that "All the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."

ISRAEL ENTERS THE LAND OF PROMISE

Joshua 3.5–17. (Read Joshua 2–4.) Commit v. 17.

Golden Text

And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. Psalm 107.7.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 3.5–17

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Mŏses, *so* I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God.

10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon a heap.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)

16 That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon a heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

5. *Sanctify yourselves.* They were to free themselves from all ceremonial uncleanness. Compare Ex. 19.10, 11. *To-morrow.* The tenth of Nisan. (Josh. 4.19.) *Wonders.* Miracles.

6. *The priests.* Though it was the business of the Levites, the sons of

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BEARING THE ARK ACROSS THE JORDAN—*Tissot*

Kohath, to carry the ark; yet on certain occasions, the most solemn ones, the priests alone performed this office. *Clarke.* There was to be a space between them and the people, verse 4.

7. *This day will I begin to magnify thee.* Joshua, as God's instrument, would receive honor. Compare Deut. 2.25. See the fulfillment of the promise in Josh. 4.14.

9. *To the children of Israel.* Their officers.

12. *Twelve men.* The purpose of this is shown in 4.1–7.

13. *From the waters.* R. V., *even the waters. Upon an heap.* R. V. *in one heap.*

15. *Brim.* R. V., *brink. Jordan overfloweth at the time of harvest.* About the spring equinox, the passover season, the melting snow on the mountains causes the Jordan to overflow its banks.

16. *Rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam.* R. V., *rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam.* The sites of Adam and Zaretan are not definitely known. *The sea of the plain.* R. V., *the sea of the Arabah. Failed and were cut off.* R. V., *was wholly cut off.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

5. *Sanctify yourselves.* If we want His presence with us, do we not need to prepare for receiving Him? Our hearts are often very Bethlehems; there is a great crowd and "No room for Him in the inn"; and He may sometimes, therefore, say in regard to His coming into the heart, "But withal prepare Me a lodging." The goodness which He has prepared for us He gives us only when He finds us preparing to receive it; and there is no place for that like the place of secret prayer. *G. H. Knight.*

10. *He will drive out from before you the Canaanites.* The Hebrews could not have achieved that enormous feat of the subjection of Canaan, with its walled towns, even in the imperfect fashion in which they did achieve it, unless they had been welded together by some great enthusiasm. Now people living a nomadic life for any length of time rarely possess any intense consciousness of national unity. The only possible explanation of the triumph of Israel, therefore, is that the people were possessed by an extraordinary amount of zeal for God, who had revealed Himself in a new and startling fashion. *W. G. Elmslie.*

13. *The waters of the Jordan shall be cut off even the waters that come down from above.* The means by which this was accomplished is understood in two ways. "The outstretched arm of God was even more visibly shown than in the crossing of the Red Sea," says Doctor W. S. Blaikie, "for in that case a natural cause, the strong east wind, contributed something to the effect, while in this case no secondary cause was employed, the drying up of the channel being due solely to miracle." Professor Charles Foster Kent thus voices the other view: "Cut off above, the waters below flowed down to the Salt Sea, leaving the Jordan bed empty. This version strongly suggests a landslide, which temporarily dammed the waters of the river until they again broke away the barrier and came rushing down, overflowing the banks as before. The name of the city, Adam (Red earth), supports the conclusion that this unusual phenomenon took place way above Jericho, where the steep, clay banks overhang the river a great way above Jericho. The mention of the spring freshets

also confirms the hypothesis of a landslide. As in the account of the Exodus, God's care for His people was revealed by the opportune use of natural forces.

Most interesting in this connection is the incident recounted in the history of Sultan Bibars, which occurred in 1257 A. D. "It was found necessary to repair the foundations of the bridge Jisr Damieh in anticipation of the retreat of the Moslem army. The task seemed impossible, but on arriving at the bridge the workmen found the river bed empty. Thus it remained for a few hours, until the work was nearly completed, then the waters came again rushing down. The cause was a landslide higher up the river."

16. *The people passed over.* Tradition has it that it was at the same place where Joshua crossed that Jesus was baptised by John. That may well be doubted, for the Bethabara where John was baptising was probably at a higher point of the river. But it is quite possible that it was at this spot that Elijah's mantle smote the river, and he and his servant passed over on dry ground. Holding that all these events occurred at the same place, tradition has called in the aid of superstition, and given a sacred character to the waters of the river at this spot. Every one has read of the pilgrimage to the Jordan, performed every spring, from which many hope to reap much advantage. *William Garden Blaikie,* in *Expositor's Bible.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

5. *Sanctify yourselves.* Our devout Alexandrian dragoman asked that he be permitted to pray, while we moved about the mosque at our pleasure. Approaching the large fountain in the center of the court, he proceeded to cleanse himself ceremonially, to "sanctify" himself for prayer, by the "wuzoo" or prescribed ablutions. With special ejaculations at every stage of progress, he washed his hands three times, "in the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful." Three times he rinsed his mouth from the fountain, three times he similarly cleansed his nostrils, his ears, his face, his head, and his neck; then his right hand and arm, and again his left; and his right foot and his left. After a few more prescribed ascriptions and petitions to God, he was ready to turn toward Mecca, and begin his formal prayer. *H. Clay Trumbull,* in *Studies in Oriental Social Life.*

12. *Take you twelve men.* Every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, 4.5. When Alexander the Great wanted to traverse the river Hyphasis in the conquest of India, he caused his army to build twelve colossal altars, according to Arrian "high as the loftiest of towers, but in breadth wider than the greatest, as thank offerings to the god for having led him victoriously thus far, and as memorials of his toils; and when they were done, he sacrificed upon them as custom required, and ordered gymnastic and equestrian contests." But, why twelve great tumuli of witness to his having reached the eastern end of the earth? Just the number of pillars set up at Sinai, — just the number of stones fetched out of Jordan, to be exalted at Gilgal! Evidently Alexander could scarcely have read his Bible to better advantage. *J. A. Paine.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The Jordan River System, paragraphs 89–94; the people dwelling in Canaan, paragraphs 118–125; Jericho, paragraph 150; Gilgal, paragraph 149.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever hear of a river which flows both ways? There is such a river in New Brunswick, Canada. It is the St. John River, which flows into the Bay of Fundy. Twice a day from the bridge over the river one may watch the stream rushing rapidly through its rocky gorge outward into the Bay, then for a brief time see its waters almost stationary, and the next moment behold them rushing the other way up stream. The river has a fall of seventeen feet at low tide, but the tides rise in the Bay from twenty-five to thirty-five feet and it is high tide when the river flows the other way.

The Jordan River always flows down from its source in the region of Mount Lebanon, on through the little Lake Merom, and later through the larger Sea of Galilee, and then onward until it finally reaches the Dead Sea. There came one day, however, when for a brief period its waters were held back above a certain point in the river, while below that point they hastened on to the Dead Sea, thus leaving the river bed bare for a considerable distance.

For Older Pupils. At the beginning of the Exodus, there was the crossing of the Red Sea; and now at the close of the Exodus, there is the crossing of the Jordan River: both most memorable events in the history of the children of Israel. Of all the great host that crossed the Red Sea, Joshua and Caleb are the only ones of their generation who now cross the Jordan. It is the time of the overflow of the Jordan, and the people of Jericho must have thought it impossible for them to cross, or they would have been there to oppose them. "Why didn't they go over the bridge?" a child questioned, but bridges there were none, and fords there were few, and those were not passable at this season of the year. The spies had crossed and recrossed by swimming, no doubt, but how shall a great host with women and children and baggage cross?

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I He led them forth in the Right Way, that they might go to a City of Habitation

Life a Pilgrimage. That all life is a pilgrimage is a thought often expressed in the Scriptures, from the time when the patriarch Jacob said: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage," onward. "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage," says the Psalmist; "Here we have no continuing city but we seek one to come," says the writer of Hebrews; and in the book of Revelation we read about that city of God towards which through our land of training here we are journeying.

I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,
I ask not: but, unless God sends His hail,
Or blinding fire-balls, sleet or stifling snow,

In some time — His good time — I shall arrive:
He guides me and the birds. *Browning.*

What of the Pathway? Selfishness chooses velvet paths and flowery meads; but where Jesus puts you, He goes there with you. He can make desert places blossom with roses. This life will look very different when you study its geography from another world. As you look back upon it from the realms of glory, no portion of your earthly pilgrimage will appear to have yielded such unexpected mercies and benefits as those days of trial when you drew honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. *Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Samuel Rutherford says: "In Heaven we will thank God more for the dark days than for the bright days, for in the bright days we were ready to forget our God, but the dark days were helpful to a closer walk with Him." If we are on our way to Heaven, when we reach that happy place, looking back upon our days, dark or bright, we will know how to thank Him for them all. As we review them all we shall say, "He led us by the right way to the city of habitation." Let us take encouragement from this, and learn to be patient on dark days, and to be thankful for them even as the bright. Things do not merely happen to us. They are for a purpose. *John Irwin Blackburn.*

I said, "Let me walk in the fields."
He said, "No, walk in the town."
I said, "There are no flowers there."
He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the skies are black;
There is nothing but noise and din."
And He wept as he sent me back;
"There is more," He said; "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun."
He answered, "Yet souls are sick,
And souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say."
He answered, "Choose, to-night,
If I am to miss you, or they."

I pleaded for time to be given.
He said, "Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in Heaven
To have followed the steps of your Guide." *Macdonald.*

The Longest Journey. Life is short, yet it is long enough to take the longest journey. Sirius and the sun are not so far apart as are a man in sin and a man in Christ. If one should go from Sirius to the sun, he would find the same things, the same element, the same gases, the same forces, but you go from the world of sin to the universe of Christ, and you find wholly different things: you have crossed chasms infinitely deep and broad. "If any man is in Christ there is a new creation" as the margin of the American Revision gives it. And that longest journey we can make in life. This is the gift of God. So if one cries to us as in the long ago, "Traveler, what

of the night?" Let us be ready to reply, "The morning cometh." And if the voice cry again, "But, traveler, what of the way?" Let us again be ready to reply, "The way has been out of the world of sin, on by the strait and narrow pathway of patience and faith, through the gateway of trust, into the city of God." For this, let us say to all, is the pilgrimage of the children of God. *Sunday School Times.*

II The ark passeth before you

"I will go before thee." A child might say to a geographer: "You talk about the earth being round! Look on this great crag; look on that deep dell; look on yonder great mountain, and the valley at its feet, and yet you talk about the earth being round." The geographer would have an instant answer for the child; his view is comprehensive; he does not look at the surface of the world in mere detail; he does not deal with inches and feet and yards; he sees a larger world than the child has had time to grasp. He explains what he means by the expression, "The earth is a globe," and justifies his strange statement. And so it is with God's wonderful dealings with us. There are great rocks and barren deserts, deep, dank, dark pits and defiles, and glens and dells, rugged places that we can not smooth over at all; and yet when He comes to say to us at the end of the journey, "Now, look back; there is the way that I have brought you," we shall be enabled to say, "Thou hast gone before us, and made our way straight." . . .

The idea of God going before every man as if he were the only man in the world is an idea that does not dwarf God, but rather exalts Him exceedingly. Whose sun is this that is coming burning and smiling in at the window? Whose sun is it? There is not a beggar in the great city who can not look at it and say, "I have it, as if there were not another being in the world." There is not a poor little sick child in any of our hospitals who can not look out of his window and talk of this great light as though every beam were all his. So God is a universal Spirit, encompassing all things — and yet He is mine, as if there were no other creature in the universe.

According to this teaching, God goes before all men, and makes the crooked places straight for them; but it is not so. There is an essential question to be settled. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy steps." Character comes in there, and this character is a Christian character, as the whole revelation with which we have to deal is a Christian revelation. *Joseph Parker.*

God's Guidance. There is a wonderful saying in one of the prophets, where it speaks of the divine guidance of Israel as being like that of a horse in the wilderness. Fancy the poor, nervous, trembling creature trying to keep its footing upon the smooth granite slabs of Sinai. Travelers dare not take their horses on mountain journeys, because they are highly nervous and are not sure-footed enough. And so, says the old prophet, that gracious Hand will be laid on the bridle, and will hold the nervous creature's head up, and so He will bring it down to rest in the valley. "Now, unto Him that is able to keep us from stumbling," as is the true rendering, "and to present us faultless . . . be glory and majesty and power." Trust Him, keep near Him, let Him choose your way. *Alexander Maclaren,* in *Monotony and Crises.*

For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead:
Lead me aright,
Though strength should falter and though heart should bleed,
Through peace to light.

I do not ask, O Lord, that Thou shouldst shed
Full radiance here;
Give but a ray of peace, that I may tread
Without a fear.

I do not ask my cross to understand,
My way to see;
Better in darkness just to feel Thy hand,
And follow Thee.

Joy is like restless day; but peace divine
Like quiet night:
Lead me, O Lord, till perfect day shall shine,
Through peace to light! *Adelaide A. Procter.*

If we will be guided, we shall be guided. What aileth thee? Hast thou lost thy way? Art thou entangled in a dark wood, and canst thou not find thy paths? Stand still, and see the salvation of God. He knows the way, and He will direct every step of our road, every hour of the day, and every day of the year, and every year of our life. If we will but be guided, we shall be guided. If we will commit our way unto the Lord, He will direct our course so that we shall not lose ourselves. *Spurgeon.*

Trusting the Guide. It was the closing hour at a large gathering of Christian Endeavorers, and the moment of the consecration meeting had come. A delegate from the West was deputed to "call the roll."

After one name was called there was a slight pause, and amid the perfect silence rose the clear, sweet tones of a young girl's voice:

"The very dimness of my sight
Makes me secure,
For groping in my misty way
I feel His hand, I hear Him say,
'My help is sure.'"

The meeting over, the delegate sought out a local Endeavorer and asked the reason for the emotion manifested by the audience in the response given. The following reply was made: "You may well wonder what touched us all so much, but you will hardly be surprised when I tell you. For months that girl's sight has been failing, and a fortnight ago she became totally blind. This is her first response since." *Rest and Reaping.*

III Miracles

Miracles are Believable. There is no greater mystery in supposing that God makes supernatural use of natural forces than there is that man makes use of them in his limited sphere. The proverbial statement, that knowledge is power, is more than a figure of speech. If a man knows how, he can communicate instantaneously with friends across the ocean, he can bridge mighty

rivers and tunnel lofty mountains, he can harness Niagara and make it conduct the traffic of a great and distant city, and by the brilliant electric sparks into which it is transformed dispel the gloom of night from an indefinite surrounding area. The difficulty with man is to learn how thus to use nature, but with God there is no such difficulty. It is as easy for Him to touch off an earthquake, or to fire a volcano, or to set in motion a tempest, as it is for a man to scratch a match or press an electric button or blow a bellows. *George Frederick Wright.*

An Instructive Fable. There is an Eastern fable of a boy having challenged his teacher to prove the existence of God by working a miracle. The teacher procured a large vessel filled with earth, in which he deposited a kernel in the boy's presence, and bade him pay attention. In the place where the kernel was put a green shoot soon appeared. The shoot became a stem; the stem put forth leaves and branches, which soon spread over the whole apartment. It then budded with blossoms, which dropping off, left golden fruit in their place, and in the short space of an hour there appeared a noble tree in the place of the seed. The youth, overcome with amazement, exclaimed, "Now I know there is a God, for I have seen His power!" The priest smiled at him, and said, "Simple child! do you only now believe? Does not what you have just seen take place in innumerable instances, year after year, only by a slower process? Is it the less wonderful on that account? He is the Lord and changes not, His mercy and power are ever the same." *The Quiver.*

Miracles not needed now. Miracles are like candles lit up until the sun arises and then blown out. Miracles in our own time are like candles in the street at mid-day. We do not want miracles. They teach men how to find out truths themselves: and after they have learned this they no more need them than a well man needs a staff, or than a grown up child needs a walking stool. They are the educating expedients of the early periods of the world. As such, they are divinely wise. After they have served their purpose as such, it is humanly foolish for persons to pretend to have them. There is no teaching in Scripture of a stated providence of miracles. They are not daily helps. They do not even belong to the mere economic relations of men. In secular things God helps the men that help themselves. *Beecher.*

Modern Miracles. When a man declares to me, "I can not believe in miracles," I reply, "I can, because I have witnessed them." "When and where?" "On a certain street in this city is a man who was a week ago given over to every form of vice and brutality, and who is now a good citizen, an honest workman, a kind husband, a loving father, a pure, upright man. Surely that is such a miracle as makes me forever believe in the possibility of miracles." *Henry Drummond.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Mysteries are merely truths which are not yet disclosed. *Alexander McKenzie.*

Jesus Christ is God's way to us, and our way to God. *William N. Clarke.*

There is more chance for a cripple on the right road than for a racer on the wrong. *D. L. Moody.*

Moral intention showing itself in physical events — that is the very idea of miracle. *Charles Gore.*

Heavenly power is never furnished for earthly parade. *Ram's Horn.*

Faith in a God who is not free to control natural forces is not the Christian faith. *T. H. Wright.*

Dwell ye within cot or hall,
Be ye lord or be ye thrall,
Have ye joy or grief for store,
Know ye this — from every door,
Straight across the sky's blue meads,
Up to Heaven a pathway leads! *Clinton Scollard.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Is anything too hard for the Lord? Gen. 18.14.

Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Matt. 28.20.

The waters saw thee, O God; the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. Psa. 77.16.

They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them. Psa. 44.3.

They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way;
They found no city of habitation.
Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.
Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble
And he delivered them out of their distresses,
He led them also by a straight way,
That they might go to a city of habitation.
Oh that men would praise Jehovah for his loving kindness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!
For he satisfieth the longing soul,
And the hungry soul he filleth with good. Psa. 107.4–9, R. V.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Let the Christ who is not only wise, but Wisdom, choose your path, and be sure that by the submission of your will all your paths are His, not only yours.

Make His path yours by following in His steps, and do in your place what you think Christ would have done if He had been there.

Keep company with Him on the road. *Alexander Maclaren.*

THE LESSON STORY

The Israelites removed from their camp at Shittim to the Jordan. It was the time of the year when the river had overflowed its banks, and the ford was not passable. The officers went among the people informing them that when the ark had gone a space of two thousand cubits before them, they were to follow it. From Joshua came the command to sanctify themselves, "for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you." The word of the Lord had come to Joshua, promising that He would be with him as He had been with Moses, that He would make him His instrument in such a way that he would be "magnified

in the sight of all Israel." Joshua communicated to the people God's message. They would know that God would be with them, that He would drive out before them the inhabitants of the land, when they saw the ark of the covenant passing before them over Jordan, and the waters parted when touched by the feet of the priests who bore the ark. It came to pass as he had said. The eventful day arrived, the tenth of Abib, or Nisan. The priests bore the ark before the people; when they entered the river the waters were held in check far above them so that they flowed not down, while below them the waters continued their way to the Dead Sea, thus leaving the bed bare. The priests with the ark on their shoulders stood still in the midst of the river bed and all the people crossed over. Then twelve men, who had been appointed by Joshua for this mission, one from each tribe, took across stones from where the priests were standing (which were afterwards piled up as a memorial in Gilgal, where the people encamped after crossing) and erected also a pile of twelve stones in the Jordan. Then the priests crossed over with the ark, and as soon as they reached the shore the Jordan returned to its bed as before.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The great miracle is the absence of miracles; it is the universal order that most speaks to us of a universal will, so reasonable in its action as to be everywhere capable of rational interpretation. So we need to become less familiar with the accidents of our faith that we may the better comprehend its permanent facts, its fundamental and eternal truths. We need to see them out of the setting of custom and common-place, standing out, as it were, sharp against the background of eternity. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

2. What is to be said regarding the moral character of the conquest of Canaan? (1) God has used war for the furtherance of righteousness and purity, and moral and religious progress. (2) The God that made our world has made this law, that wherever sin of a certain type and degree has come in, the retribution of moral obliquity and degradation has come in also, in the shape of annihilation at the hands of a superior race. All history testifies that the most blighting curse of false religion in those days lay in the religion of those Canaanites. Even classic pagan writers say that blank atheism would have been better than that. *W. S. Elmslie.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What vision did Joshua have before the capture of Jericho? (Josh. 5.13–15; 6.1–5.) 2. What had Balaam said in regard to the success of the Israelites? (Num. 23.22; 24.8.) 3. Read the first three verses of Psalm 44. 4. What curse did Joshua utter upon the one who should build the gates of Jericho? (Josh. 6.26.) Was the prophecy fulfilled? (1 Kings 16.34.) 5. Narrate the sin and punishment of Achan. 6. How did the Gibeonites save their lives? (Josh. 9.3–27.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The Israelites remained in camp at Gilgal. Those who had not been circumcised received that rite, and on the 14th of the month the Passover was observed. The supply of manna ceased, for they now had the corn of the land. To Joshua an angel, "The captain of the host of the Lord," appeared.

THE CAPTURE OF JERICHO

Joshua 6.8–20. (Read Joshua 5–8.) Commit v. 20.

Golden Text

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. Hebrews 11.30.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 6.8–20

8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the Lord, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them.

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rearward came after the ark, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11 So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about *it* once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord.

13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rearward came after the ark of the Lord, *the priests* going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be accursed, *even* it, and all that *are* therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 And ye, in any wise keep *yourselves* from the accursed thing, lest ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.

20 So the people shouted when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

8. *Before the Lord.* Before the ark.

9. *Rearward.* Rearguard.

10. *The camp.* At Gilgal.

17. *Accursed.* R. V., *devoted.* See Lev. 27.28; Num. 18.14. Jericho was

devoted to the Lord in that it was to be utterly destroyed as a religious act. Devoted men and animals were killed; devoted things were destroyed or given to the sanctuary. "The word *devoted* is here analogous to the Polynesian *taboo* and the Greek *anathema*." *Rahab.* See the second chapter of Joshua.

18. The Revised Version reads: *But as for you, only keep yourselves from the accursed thing; so would ye make the camp of Israel accursed, and trouble it.* He who took anything devoted became himself devoted or accursed.

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Encompassing Jericho. From a Painting by Tissot.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

17. *Rahab.* Two references are made in the New Testament to Rahab's faith. (Heb. 11.31; Jas. 2.25.) It was true faith, though exercised only toward a fragment of the truth. It is not the amount of truth that a man holds which saves him; but the grasp with which he holds it. All that Rahab knew was that God had delivered His people from Pharaoh, and had promised to give them that land; and she believed it; and it was accounted to her for righteousness. *F. B. Meyer.*

The stringency of the Mosaic law prohibiting intermarriage with the accursed race was relaxed in Rahab's favor. To her was traced back the princely lineage of David, and of a Greater than David. Her trust in God and her kindly hospitality whilst yet a heathen, were treasured up by the better spirits of the later Jewish and early Christian Church as a signal instance of the universality of divine mercy and of religious faith. *Dean Stanley.*

19. *All the silver and gold and vessels of brass and iron.* It was no savage or unpeopled region awaiting only occupation. It was a wealthy land thickly inhabited by a people, apparently of a common stock, though broken up into numerous clans — known by different names, Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Jebusites,— and never drawn into a common

bond unless that bond was the power of an Egyptian Pharoah, like Thotmes III, or an Assyrian conqueror. The adventures of an Egyptian officer sent into Syria to collect the tribute, about the era of the Exodus, have been preserved on papyrus. They give a vivid impression of the dangers of travel. We hear of gold vessels with handles, collars and other ornaments of lapis lazuli, dishes and vessels of silver, of laden boats and galleys, of chariots and horses, of glass, and worked and dyed materials, besides many other products of art and industry, as among the plunder sent to Rameses II. There was evidence of wealth and prosperity, and even of culture, since at least in one case, Kirjath-sephir, a library gave its name to a city.

Had this country been united under one powerful head, the task of Israel would have been harder than it was. Joshua's advantage, apart from the enthusiasm created in his soldiers by their religious belief, lay in the fact that the land on which he marched was inhabited by so many independent tribes, and had no central authority. *A. S Aglen.*

20. *The wall fell down.* The story of the fall of Jericho, and the Passage of the Jordan, carries with it the same impression as that of the Exodus: that it was not by their own power, but by a Higher, that the Israelites were to effect their first entrance into the Promised Land. Whatever might be their own part in what followed — whatever might be their own even in this — the sagacity of Joshua, the venturesomeness of the spies, the fidelity of Rahab, the seven days' march, the well-known and terrible war-cry; yet the river is crossed, and the city falls, by other means. It may be that these means were found in the resources of the natural agencies of earthquake or volcanic convulsion, which mark the whole of the Jordan valley, from Gennesareth to the Dead Sea, and which are perpetually recurring in its course, not only during the sacred history, but to our own time. If so, we have a remarkable illustration and confirmation of the narrative, the more so, because the secondary causes of these phenomena must have been to the sacred historians themselves unknown. *Stanley, History of Jewish Church.*

17. *All that are therein shall be accursed.* It is not remarkable that, with the remarkable sense of the sanctity of human life attained in our country and in our age, and the intense horror which we have at scenes of blood and death, the idea of this slaughter should excite a strong feeling of repugnance. We must remember that three thousand years ago, and in the tumultuous reigns of the East such a sentiment was unknown. The massacre of one tribe by another was an event of frequent occurrence, and so little thought of that a year or two after the survivors of the massacre might be found on perfectly good terms with those who had committed it. *William Garden Blaikie.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Jericho, paragraph 150; Ai, paragraph 139; Shechem, paragraph 136; review of physical regions, paragraphs 95, 96.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Once a British regiment heard the trumpets sound the order to charge a company of French cuirassiers. They advanced bravely, but their swords bent double at the first stroke, and they were ruthlessly

slaughtered by the enemy. They supposed they had weapons of truest steel, but they proved to be of worthless metal. What is the subject of our lesson to-day? That attack was made by a company that had no weapons whatever, for they trusted not in their own strength, knowing that God would give them the victory.

For Older Pupils. We now begin the conquest of Canaan, that goal of the Hebrews for so many long centuries. Egyptian documents show that shortly before this Thothmes III had waged his wars in Canaan and broken up the confederacy of Canaanitish kings. The Israelites found the territory divided among many independent kings, each with his stronghold and surrounding district. One chapter of Joshua enumerates thirty-one kings conquered. Although the unconquered territory is carefully given, yet if we closed our study of this period with the book of Joshua we might gain the general impression that by two great campaigns waged during the space of about seven years, Joshua, at the head of the united tribes, conquered almost all Palestine, utterly destroyed its inhabitants, and apportioned it among the tribes, who then had nothing to do but settle down and enjoy their inheritance. But the book of Judges follows, and there we see the tribes, singly or united by common interests, still fighting on with varying success, or settling peaceably among the inhabitants. At the death of Joshua the Israelites really held only the mountainous parts of central and southern Palestine, a line of Canaanite strongholds crossed the country where Jerusalem, then Jebus, stands, and the fertile valleys and the seaboard plain remained wholly in the hands of the Canaanites. In fact, the conquest of Canaan was a slow process, lasting during several generations, and it was only in the beginning that they stormed the cities and massacred the inhabitants. A miracle inaugurates their conquest.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I By Faith the Walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about Seven Days

Faith before Common-Sense. Faith is commonly considered very well in its place, but it is supposed that its place is that of coming after that of common-sense, not of going before it. The prevailing idea among even Christian believers is, that a man's first duty is to exercise common-sense; then it is very well to have faith in God, by depending on Him to add His blessing to what a man has done or is doing for himself. The idea that faith in God is man's first duty, which must precede the exercise of common-sense, or indeed its very existence, and that, if one must chose between faith and common-sense, faith is to be preferred, is generally scouted as unreasonable and absurd. Yet faith first, and then common-sense, is the natural order.

If God has any power, God has all power. If man is dependent on God at any time, man is dependent on God at all times. If man ought to trust God after man has done all he can do, man ought also to trust God before man begins to do, to trust God while man is doing all that he can do, and to trust God when man has done his utmost.

When the Canaanites depended for protection on the walls of Jericho, at a trumpet blast in faith from the people of God those Jericho walls fell prostrate. When God's people under Hezekiah themselves built walls about

Jerusalem for defense, they were brought to realize that those walls (the best that common-sense could dictate) were no sure protection against the Assyrian. Then Hezekiah went to God in his extremity, and God heard his prayer and granted him deliverance, without making any use of the walls of defense, which common-sense without faith had uselessly built up. All the teaching of the history of God's ancient people was in the same direction, and this for our guidance as well as theirs. Without faith, common-sense is not a safe guide; only when faith leads, is common-sense of practical service.

Cromwell's counsel to his soldiers was, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." That is the Christian statement of the true order of faith and common-sense. Mohammed reversed the order in his counsel, "Tether the camels first, and then trust in God to take care of them." God is ever to be recognized as the Great Commander, in whose service whatever is attempted is to be prosecuted trustfully to the final issue. God is never to be thought of, or called on, as if He were a quartermaster or commissary to furnish supplies in behalf of a campaign planned and directed by one possessed of mere human knowledge and power. God is to be served and treated as man's ruler. God is not to be summoned as man's mere servant or helper. Man is ever to put faith first, faith next, and faith always, and his common-sense or his greatest wisdom is ever to be subordinate to his faith. *Editorial in Sunday School Times.*

Faith surmounts Every Obstacle. If I were no longer a Christian I would not serve the Emperor another hour. If I did not put my trust in God, I should certainly place none in earthly masters. If I did not believe in a divine Providence which has ordained this German nation to something good and great, I would at once give up my trade as a statesman, or I would never have gone into the business. Deprive me of this faith, and you deprive me of my fatherland. If you trust in God and yourself, you can surmount every obstacle. One must not always be asking what may happen to one in life, but one must advance fearlessly and bravely. *Bismarck.*

God is at the Helm. As rowers in a boat turn their backs to the shore and trust to the man at the helm, whose eye is fixed upon it, so should we proceed in duty through life — turn our back from our anxious cares for the future, and leave the guidance of them all to God, who guides the helm. *Bowes.*

II Great Results from Inadequate Means

God furnished the Power. When we have clear indications of the divine Mind as to any course of action we are to advance to it promptly and without fear, even though the means at our disposal appear utterly inadequate to the object sought to be obtained. No man goeth a warfare at his own charges in the service of God. The resources of infinite power avail for that service, and they are sure to be brought into play if it be undertaken for God's glory, and in accordance with His will. Who could have supposed that the fishermen of Galilee would in the end triumph over all the might of rulers; over all the influence of priesthoods and systems of worship enshrined in the traditions of centuries; over all the learning of the philosopher, and over all the prejudices of the multitude? The secret lay in the promise of Jesus — "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Who could have thought that the distress of a kind-hearted medical student

in London for a batch of poor boys who "didn't live nowhere," and whose pale faces, as they lay on a cold night on the roof of a shed, stirred in him an irrepressible compassion, would give birth to one of the marvels of London philanthropy,— Doctor Barnardo's twenty institutions, caring for three to four thousand children? When Carey on his shoemaker's stool contemplated the evangelization of India, there was as great a gulf between the end and the apparent means, as when the priests blew with their rams' horns round the walls of Jericho. But Carey felt it to be a divine command, and Joshua-like, set himself to obey it, leaving to God from whom it came to furnish the power by which the work was to be done. And wherever there have been found men and women with a strong faith in God, who have looked on His will as recorded in the Scriptures with as much reverence as if it had been announced personally to themselves, and who have set themselves to obey that will with a sense of its reality, and a faith in God's promised help, like that of Joshua as the priests marched round the walls of Jericho, the same result has been realized; success has been achieved worthy of the announcement — The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. *William Garden Blaikie,* in *Expositor's Bible.*

God's Biddings are Enablings. There are times when it is true that duty is not measured by ability. We are often called on to do what we can not do; we are to perform the impossible, to achieve the unachievable; we are, in a word, to make the iron swim. How could the disciples with their five barley loaves and two small fishes feed thousands of hungry men, women, and children? Judged by all ordinary rules, we might say that it was absolutely impossible for them to do this. Yet Christ said, "Give ye them to eat." We must remember that with the command went the divine Power which made the accomplishment possible. Quaintly has this thought been expressed: "All God's biddings are enablings." In all relations in life we are at times commanded to perform tasks quite beyond our unaided strength. Triumphantly does the matchless Paul exclaim, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." *R. S. MacArthur.*

Making Small Calibers Effective. A poor old woman came one day to the home of another poor woman named Madeleine, and begged for food. Madeleine took her in and shared her bed with her. When another poor woman came, Madeleine gave up her bed to the two and made for herself a "shake-down" in the kitchen. Still others came, and she went about begging support for her "cottage hospital." This was the beginning of that branch of the society known as the Little Sisters of the Poor.

"Small caliber is no longer a reproach," says the *Sunday School Times.* "It used to mean only a pop-gun, now it means the most effective army rifles. Science has discovered that, if you put high power behind, you can do the most efficient work with the caliber of guns that once were used as boys' playthings. It is a good lesson for Christians. It is not so much largeness of place or fortune or opportunity that counts; it is putting the divine Power behind our work."

III Though Success delay, Labor is not Lost

Preparatory Labor. In many good enterprises all that is done for a long time may appear to be labor lost, and not to advance us by one

step nearer to the object in view. For six days the priests carried the ark around Jericho, but not one stone was loosened from the walls, not by one iota did the defense seem to yield. Six times on the seventh day there was an equally complete want of result. Nay, the seventh perambulation on the seventh day appeared to be equally unsuccessful until the seventh last moment; but when that moment came the whole defense of the city came tumbling to the ground. It is often God's method to do a great deal of work unseen, and then on a sudden effect the consummation. And whenever we are working in accordance with God's will it is our encouragement to believe that though our visible success is hardly appreciable, yet good and real work is done.

The Reformation of the Church in the Middle Ages — how little progress it seemed to make during weary centuries; and even when victory seemed to be drawing nigh, how thoroughly was it arrested by the martyrdom of Huss and Jerome in Bohemia, the extinction of the light of Wicliffe in England, and the suppression of the Lollards in Scotland! And when in Providence some causes began to operate that seemed to have a bearing on the desired consummation, such as the invention of printing, the revival of learning, and the love of freedom, how feebly they seemed to operate in opposition to that overwhelming force which the Papacy had been accumulating for centuries, and which nothing seemed able to touch! But when Luther appeared, nailed his theses to the door of the Wittemberg church, and took up the bold attitude of an out and out opponent to Rome, in one hour the Church was struck as with an earthquake; it reeled to its foundations, and half of the proud structure fell. *William Garden Blaikie.*

The Policy of Maximus. When Hannibal had swept over the Alps and brought terror down into Italy, the Roman army thirsted for the fight. They hastened out to meet the foe, and died in sore defeat. The African swept down past Rome to stop the supplies of the city. A Roman general, Maximus, said: "Do not hurry, my countrymen; let them exhaust themselves in delay." But the Roman army was haughty and impatient. So out they went to do and to die. At length they saw that Maximus was right. The Africans could fight, yes, under Hannibal they seemed invincible; but far removed from sunny home and their supplies they could not wait. And when Rome left them alone to wait, they got on board their ships and in disgust went back to the dark continent. At that hour Maximus was the hero of Rome. The Apostle of Delay was triumphant. Yes, there are times for delay, when the course that you are about to take is doubtful. But when before you stands the Son of God, bidding you follow in His steps, shall you then adopt the policy of Maximus? *A. J. Archibald,* in *Current Anecdotes.*

Delays are not Denials. They have preserved in Bedford, England, the door of the jail which was locked on John Bunyan. I looked at it long and earnestly. I thought of the many prayers which Bunyan must have pleaded behind it that that door might swing open for him. Yet for twelve years the bolts of that door stood undrawn. But the delay was how affluently fruitful! Dreams were going on behind that door and the world needed them. When *The Pilgrim's Progress* of which Bunyan dreamed had taken shape and tangibility, Bunyan's Lord, who had never for an instant forgotten him while the slow years passed, swung that jail door wide. Let us give God time. Let us trust His wisdom. Sometimes quick answer would be worst answer.

Let us learn Adam Slowman's so needed lesson for our impatient hearts, that "delays are not denials." *Wayland Hoyt.*

The Moral Training of Delay. Did we get everything we asked for in the very hour of the asking, I think it would be a long farewell to manhood. The one sure way to ruin a child is to give it immediately all for which it asks; and to the Ancient of Days I fancy the oldest here are but as little children. Work reveals character but so does waiting. Waiting shows the baby or the man. We need to be tested to prove if we be worthy to receive and use the thing we crave. *G. H. Morrison.*

God has promised to satisfy — but He did not say when. God has time enough, and so have you. God has boundless resources, and His resources are yours. Can you not trust Him? Trust and wait. He knows what is best for you, He has reason for denying you now, but in the end He will satisfy. *M. D. Babcock.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

You have all the power of Heaven at your back, and you must succeed. *Henry Drummond.*

There is something better than understanding God, and that is trusting Him. *G. H. Knight.*

Man is a spiritual Columbus, who is happier for believing in his undiscovered country before he sees its outlines. *N. D. Hillis.*

Plant patience in the garden of thy soul; the roots are bitter, but the fruits are sweet. *H. Austin.*

That blessed thing that the Bible calls faith is a state of soul in which the things of God become glorious certainties. *F. W. Robertson.*

It is almost as presumptuous to think you can do nothing as to think you can do everything. *Phillips Brooks.*

God's ways seem dark, but, soon or late,
They touch the shining hills of day;
The evil cannot brook delay;
The good can well afford to wait. *Whittier.*

In the true path the delays are as important as the speed, for the hour is the point, and not the swiftness; an hour too soon may be as disastrous as an hour too late. *George Macdonald.*

The world is wide
In time and tide
And — God is Guide;
Then do not hurry.

That man is blest
Who does his best
And — leaves the rest;
Then do not worry. *Charles F. Deems.*

We are not to limit our possibilities to the measure of the five loaves; we have the loaves plus the Lord of the Harvest, and it is in this divine combination that we attain the possibility of feeding the multitude. *Jowett.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord. None devoted, which shall be of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death. Lev. 27.28, 29.

If ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies. Num. 10.9.

The Lord your God is he that hath fought for you. Josh. 23.3.

Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that hath no power: help us, O Lord our God: for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. 2 Chron. 14.11.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

"O Lord, make haste to help us!" is the cry of the Psalmist, and that cry has been uttered in the hearts of almost every one from that far distant day to the present time. It is especially natural for young people to want things to come to pass, to become impatient when the results of their activities in God's cause are slow in appearing, to become discouraged because of God's delays; they need to learn that God's delays are not denials.

"It is not so, but so it looks;
And we lose courage then;
And doubts will come if God hath kept
His promises to men;"

sings Faber. If there must be six days of weary traveling round the walls, the seventh day will come in which the walls will fall. Paul's words to the Corinthians should be ever kept in mind: "Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that ye labor not in vain in the Lord."

THE LESSON STORY

After the crossing of the Jordan the Israelites made Gilgal their headquarters for an indefinite period. Their first conquest must be the city of Jericho, for it stood in the way of their progress westward into central Palestine. The city was "shut up, none went out and none came in." Strange orders were given for its capture. How the besieged must have wondered as they saw the procession of Israelites move steadily around the city, a guard of armed men leading, then seven white-robed priests blowing on their curved trumpets, after them the ark borne by priests, and a rearguard of silent warriors following! No battering rams had they to break down the walls, no arrows to shoot over into the city. What could it mean? As once a day for six successive days the besieged saw this mysterious procession compass their city and then return to their camp, their terror must have increased, for they knew how God had made a way for His people through the Red Sea and then through the Jordan, and now it must be He who is waging this strange warfare. What will the result be? On the seventh day the Israelites compassed the city seven times, and when the decisive moment had come, the priests gave their long trumpet blast and Joshua ordered all that great host to give a shout of victory, "for God hath given you the city." What faith in God, their Captain, was theirs as

they gave that mighty shout! The wall collapsed, they marched in, and they burned the city. Only Rahab and her kindred were saved of all that city full, and their lives were spared because Rahab had saved the lives of the spies whom Joshua had sent from the other side of the Jordan.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The right of the Israelites to Canaan and the rightfulness of their massacre of the Canaanites.

2. Was the falling of the walls of Jericho a mediate miracle? It is a well-known fact that an army is ordered to "break step" when crossing a bridge, lest their steady tramp imperil the structure, and the regular vibrations of a violin played for a number of years in structures of brick or stone have seriously damaged the walls. May not the steady tramp around the city of Jericho, once each day, the constant blowing of trumpets, the seven times circuit on the seventh day, and the united shout of all that mighty host — may not the vibrations set in motion by their tread and the concussions of trumpets and shoutings — have been the actual means used by God to overthrow the walls, which were probably of unbaked bricks on a foundation not of stone?

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Review lesson IX, third quarter. 2. Read Num. 14.5–11; Deut. 1.19–36. 3. What sort of memories came to Jacob when he returned to Canaan? (Lesson II, second quarter.) 4. Did Caleb succeed in driving out the Anakim? (See Josh. 15.13–15.) 5. What statement was made about Moses' vigor in his old age, recalled by verse 11? (Lesson XII, third quarter.) 6. What reason had Paul for staying in Ephesus which was similar to Caleb's reason for asking for Hebron? (1 Cor. 16.9.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The gold and silver and brass and iron of Jericho was rescued for the sanctuary, but everything else was ordered destroyed. Achan buried in his tent a Babylonish garment and gold which he coveted, and was summarily put to death for his disobedience, for to his sin was due the defeat at Ai, the next stronghold attacked. A second attack upon Ai was successful. Next is recorded the pilgrimage to Shechem, there to carry out the great religious ceremony enjoined by Moses. (Deut. 27.28.) The Gibeonites disguised as travelers from a far country made a league with the Israelites, and when the latter learned their stratagem, they made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the tabernacle. The southern Amorite kings united in a confederacy against Israel, but with great swiftness and skill Joshua attacked and routed them at Gibeon. City after city in southern Canaan was stormed and taken. A fierce conflict was next held on the plain southwest of Lake Merom against the northern confederacy of kings, who were utterly routed. The last of Joshua's conquests was of the Anakim, the race of giants who had so terrified the majority of the spies.

CALEB'S FAITHFULNESS REWARDED

Joshua 14.6–15. (Read the chapter.) Commit vv. 7, 8.

Golden Text

Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Matt. 25.23.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 14.6–15

6 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord thy God.

10 And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while *the children of* Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I *am* this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As yet I *am as* strong this day as *I was* in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so *is* my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fenced: if so be the Lord *will be* with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.

13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day; because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.

15 And the name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba; *which Arba was* a great man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

6. *The children of Judah.* They support Caleb in his claim, for though he probably was of foreign birth he was a member of their tribe. *The Lord said unto Moses concerning me.* The reference seems to be to Num. 14.24 and Deut. 1.36.

7. *Forty years old was I.* On this statement and that of his age given in verse 10 is based the reckoning of the duration of Joshua's war of conquest. The spies made their report at Kadesh-barnea thirty-eight years before the people entered Canaan. Caleb, then, was seventy-eight at the time of the crossing of the Jordan, and eighty-five now, hence seven years had been spent

in Canaan. *As it was in mine heart.* He brought back a sincere report. He had the courage of his convictions. See Num. 13.30; 14.6–9.

8. *My brethren.* The other spies. *Made the heart of the people melt.* See Num. 14.1–4; Deut. 1.28. In the Hebrew "despair" is "a melting of the heart." *Farrar. I wholly followed the Lord my God.* See Num. 32.12.

10. *Wandered.* R. V., *walked.*

11. *To go out and come in.* A proverbial expression for an active life. See Deut. 31.2; 1 Kings 3.7.

12. *This mountain.* R. V., *this hill country.* The region about Hebron where the Anakim dwelt. *In that day.* When the spies made their report. *Fenced.* R. V., *fortified. If so be, etc.* R. V., *it may be that Jehovah will be with me and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake.* In Josh. 10.36, 37 Joshua is said to have conquered Hebron, but after his northern campaign this section seems to have needed reconquering.

13. *Blessed him.* An official blessing before others of the tribe of Judah.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

6. *The children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal.* The history of Caleb seems to have a special fascination for the sacred historian. We read of him here, and in the next chapter, and in the first chapter of Judges. Whether this was due to his bravery, his sincerity, his hale and hearty old age, or his foreign extraction coupled with his zeal for his adopted country and tribe, or from the combination of all these, it is not necessary to decide. The brave man is sure to win respect. He may be accused of rashness, want of judgment, intemperance of language or of purpose; but in the end he secures the confidence and attachment of all. The history of Caleb is the history of every man who is honest in setting himself above the prevailing opinion of the day. His report was unpopular at first. The people sympathized with the cowardly ten. But events demonstrated the correctness of his view, and he became a popular hero. His tribe came with him to support his request, and if he were not of Israelite origin, this incident makes the moral still more striking. *J. J. Lias.*

8. *I wholly followed the Lord.*

My child, be faithful.
Is the work small? This I require of thee,
Do it with all thy heart as unto Me.

My child, be faithful.
Great is thy task? My grace will suffice for thee.
In well-doing weary not, co-laborer with Me.

My child, be faithful.
Only to sow and reap I ask of thee —
This is thy part — increase is given by Me.

Eleanor Amerman Sutphen.

11. *As my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war.* Of all the Israelites that received their inheritance in the Land of Promise, Caleb appears to have been the only one who succeeded in perfectly expelling the native occupants of the country. The Israelites generally seem to have made but poor headway against their strong and mighty foes, with their chariots of

iron and fenced walls. Repeatedly we encounter the sorrowful affirmation, "They were not able to drive them out." But Caleb was a notable exception. What though Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim! (14.15.) What though his three grandsons were prepared to yield their lives rather than give up possession! (15.14.) Yet Caleb drove them out — not he, indeed, but the Lord who was with him and gave him a victory that must have otherwise eluded even his strong hands. The man who wholly followed the Lord was alone wholly victorious. *B. F. Meyer, Joshua.*

12. *For the Anakim were there.* There is nothing we admire more in military annals than a soldier volunteering for the most hazardous and difficult of posts. In the spiritual warfare, too, we do not want instances of the same spirit. We recall Captain Allan Gardiner choosing Tierra del Fuego as his mission sphere just because the people were so ferocious, the climate so repulsive, and the work so difficult that no one else was likely to take it up. We think of the second band who went out after Gardiner and his companions had been starved to death; and still more, after these were massacred by the natives, of the third detachment who were moved simply by the consideration that the case was so desperate. Or we think of Livingstone begging the directors of the London Mission Society, wherever they sent him, to be sure that it was "Forward"; turning aside from all previous mission stations, and the comparative ease they afforded, to grapple with the barbarian where he had never begun to be tamed. *William Garden Blaikie.*

13. *Joshua gave unto Caleb Hebron for an inheritance.* There is some difficulty in adjusting the three passages in which the settlement of Caleb is referred to. From this first passage of the three we are led to think that it was before the tribe of Judah obtained its portion. Again, from chapter 15.13 we might suppose that it was simultaneously with the rest of the tribe. From Judges 1.10 again, it might be thought that the subduing of the natives in Hebron was effected, not by Caleb alone, but by the tribe of Judah, and that it took place "after the death of Joshua." (Judges 1.1.) Putting all these together, it would appear that Hebron was assigned to Caleb before the tribe of Judah was settled; that this allocation was ratified at the general settlement; that as Caleb was a member of the tribe, his services against the Canaanites and especially the Anakim, were ascribed to his tribe; and that the process of depossessing the Canaanites went on for some time after the death of Joshua. The repetitions in the narrative concerning Caleb form one of the considerations that favor the idea of more sources than one having been made use of in the composition of this book. *William Garden Blaikie.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Gilgal, paragraph 149; Kadesh-barnea, paragraphs 70, 71; Hebron, paragraph 145; review of physical features, paragraphs 97–103.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. The second Sunday in April we had a lesson entitled "God gives Jacob a New Name." What was the new name? Why was it given? Where was Jacob at that time? Where was he going? He had been away from his father's home many years, and now on his return he

feared to meet his brother Esau. Why? Probably during all these last years of his life he had thought his past was gone, that he had escaped it, but now he fully realized that he could no more get away from his past than he could from himself. And that past was not a pleasant one to call to mind. He had wronged his brother, and his conscience told him that that brother was coming with his four hundred men to avenge his wrong.

To-day we study about another Bible hero who recalls his past, not with sorrow and fear, as Jacob did, but with joy and the assurance that he is now to receive his reward for that past.

For Older Pupils. Dean Stanley has remarked that there have always been two principles adopted by conquerors in the division of new territory. One is exemplified in the Norman conquest of England, and in the conquests of modern times, by which territory is appropriated according to the power or will of the conqueror. The other is exemplified by the conquests of Greece and Rome, where the state undertook to assign the different portions of the conquered territory. Both of the principles were adopted in the conquests of Palestine. The first is seen in the conquest of Jair and Nobah on the east of Jordan, in the Danite capture of the Phœnician Laish, and in the attack of Caleb on Hebron; the second, in the assignment by lot of the territory of the seven tribes and a half after the two great tribes of Judah and Joseph had been provided for. The method of distribution by lot, which was not unknown to the Gentiles, was well designed to prevent complaint or misunderstanding among the tribes. The lot, however, only determined the position of the tribes, not the extent of their territory, and was proportioned to the size of the tribe, and was increased or diminished after the division as circumstances demanded. We are not told how the lots were taken. Probably there were two urns, one containing the names of the tribes, and the other those of the divisions of the land, and a name was taken out at the same time from each of the urns.

Before the apportionment by lot came the claim of Caleb. *Professor Croskery,* in *Joshua and the Conquest.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Preparing Pleasant Memories

Our Inheritance. You inherit from your ancestors certain tendencies, but you inherit from yourselves those developed tendencies. It may be that you started in life with a weak lung, but the outdoor life you led has made that lung healthy and strong; its strength is its inheritance from your own past. Perhaps you started in life with a quick temper, but you fought and subdued it; the quick temper was your inheritance from your parents, but the good temper is your inheritance from yourself.

"We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made;
And fill our future's atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.
The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own;
And in the fields of Destiny
We reap as we have sown."

You wish to inherit only pleasant memories of the past; are you sowing pleasant memories? Paul looked back over his life and said, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith," and then he looked forward and said, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

At eighty-five years of age Caleb could look back over his past life and have only pleasant thoughts to recall of duty well fulfilled, of a life that "wholly followed the Lord." While still a young man Robert Burns could only say,

"I backward cast mine e'e
On prospects drear."

Doctor Van Dyke has a little poem entitled *The Child in the Garden.* It is "the garden of untroubled thought" which the poet wishes again to visit; the door is open, shall he enter? Then just within the gate he sees a child who holds out his hands to him and then

"Come in," he says, "and play awhile with me;
I am the little child you used to be."

We can never escape from our past. There will always be for us the child or the youth we used to be. The faculty we have of holding the past in the store-house of our mind and then reproducing it at will — and more often without will — is strange and wonderful. We may think we have forgotten, but unexpectedly "the child we used to be" will stand before us. Shall we be glad to see him?

"Time will bear you fast and free,
On the wings no eye can see
To the years that are to be —
Boys and girls,
Thro' your springtime buds and flowers,
Thro' your summer's fruitful bowers,
Thro' your autumn's winds and showers —
Girls and boys."

The Past will be recalled. Here is a vessel down in the deep waters of the sea, but not so far down that it can not be reached. Divers come in their peculiar dress, and down they go into the dark waters and explore the hold of the unfortunate ship. You stand there on the pontoon where the divers are working. Down goes the diver and you wait in almost breathless suspense. Presently the signal is given, and his colleague on the pontoon draws him up. Your flesh almost creeps as there come up from the mysterious depths below there, treasures that were sunken and buried in the hold of that vessel. But he does not always bring up treasures and things that are attractive. Sometimes he brings up things slimy and repulsive, things that shock and sicken you. So these memories of ours are divers and what they bring up out of that sunken vessel which we call our past will depend upon the kind of lives we have been leading. The divers will go down whether we want them to or not. The memories of life can not be kept sleeping always. *R. F. Coyle.*

How to prepare for the Future. The school-boy is not prepared for the tasks and responsibilities of manhood by continually dwelling on the things he will do when he becomes a man; it is well that he should think very little about them, and that the emphasis of his thought should rest on the work,

the play, and the pleasure of the moment. . . . He who thinks wisely of the present and does well with the present thinks most wisely and does best with the future; for the future is but the unfolding of the present. The wise farmer spends very little time in meditating on his harvest at the time of seed-sowing; his whole concern is to get the seed under the ground under the best conditions, and to give it the best possible care. . . . The best preparation for the future, whether for work, calamity, trial or task, is to do thoroughly, bravely, and cheerfully those things which fall to our hand day by day. *Hamilton Wright Mabie,* in *Works and Days.*

You must begin your Christian Life now. My young friends, let me urge it upon you that you make no feint of it, that you determine to live just such a life as God will plan you. Yield yourselves up to the complete sway and the perfect teaching of God. Do it now, do it from the first, and keep yourselves in that mind to the end, and make no doubt of this, that God's plan for you will be a good one and His work a work more wondrous and glorious than you can either execute or think.

If you want a happy life, a great life, a life that shall be a song, then it must be a wholly and completely Christian life, not a partially Christian life such as you will graft upon the old hard timber of a youth spent in sin by some late repentance, but such a life as you can have only when you give the dew of your youth to God. This now you can, a little further on you can not — the privilege is gone. May God reveal this wisdom to you and write it in your heart, that it may be yours in the years when your sun is sinking to look back on a good and great life and sing, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works." *Horace Bushnell.*

II I WHOLLY FOLLOWED THE LORD

Can one wholly follow the Lord? What does the word *wholly* mean? In a whole or complete manner, entirely, completely, perfectly, to the exclusion of other things, totally, fully, says the dictionary. This makes Caleb seem to assert something impossible, does it not? Listen to what Elizabeth Fry said: "Since my heart was touched, at seventeen, I believe I have never awaked from sleep, in sickness or health, by day or night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve my God." Hear what Luther said: "If any man knocks at the door of my breast and says, 'Who lives there?' My answer is 'Jesus Christ lives here, not Martin Luther.'" Do not these words of Elizabeth Fry and Martin Luther explain what it means wholly to follow the Lord? Mistakes they made, of course, faults they committed, no doubt, but their aim was wholly, perfectly, to do the will of God. The most of the difficulties of trying to live the Christian life arise from attempting to half live it, as Professor Drummond has well said.

How wholly to follow the Lord. Few men have lived lives as conscious of the presence of Christ as did McCheyne. One has led us into the secret of his experience by pointing out that "he aimed at enjoying God all the day." Observe that it was a constant, and not an intermittent experience which he had as his object. And notice, what is even more important, he had this great object as a definite aim. A deputation waited on Ruysboeck, the Belgian monk, to learn the secret of his holiness. His answer is significant, "Ye are

as holy as ye truly will to be holy." It would be well for us to test the sincerity of our desire to have Christ become and remain real to us, by examining ourselves with a few questions. Have I resolved that I will continue to study the life and works and words of Christ? Have I resolved that I will obey Christ in all things, and that I will seek to conform my life to His example? "Ye are as holy as ye truly will to be holy." Have I resolved that I will preserve an uncompromising attitude toward sin in all forms and all degrees, even toward so-called little sins? Have I resolved that I will persist (that is, not become discouraged) in the cultivation of the habit of reminding myself of the presence of Christ? "Ye are as holy as ye truly will to be holy." Have I resolved that I will associate more intimately with those men of God to whom Christ is a great reality? Have I resolved that I will serve men, especially those in need, cost what it may? "Ye are as holy as ye truly will to be holy"—that is, ye are holy as ye truly resolve, determine, make up your mind to be holy. *John R. Mott,* in *Ram's Horn.*

What is Holiness? Holiness, in the Scriptural sense, is:

1. Not freedom from all sin, but freedom from the necessity of sinning.
2. Not infallible judgment, but sincere endeavor to follow a Higher wisdom.
3. Not freedom from temptation, but power to overcome temptation.
4. Not absence of physical infirmity, but triumph over bodily affliction.
5. Not absence of conflict, but victory through conflict.
6. Not freedom from the liability of falling, but gracious ability to prevent falling.
7. Not impossibility of progress, but deliverance from ever standing still. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Signal piety shall be crowned with signal power. George Whitfield's prayer was, "O Lord, make me an extraordinary Christian." He sought extraordinary grace, he was answered by extraordinary usefulness. *Spurgeon.*

III Thou hast been Faithful over a Few Things

The Reason the Man with One Talent was Unfaithful. In the history of a man who began life with a fair, if slender, endowment, and who ended his days in spiritual darkness and bankruptcy, where did he begin to go wrong? Where did he take his first turning to his ill-starred destiny? He first went wrong in his perverse and unworthy thinking about himself. His equipment was not so brilliant as that of the man who had obtained the five talents. And it is just here that his reasoning went astray. He began to make comparisons between himself and others, and because he lacked their brilliance, he despised his own gift. Now comparisons are commonly odious, but in this sphere they are more than odious, they are frought with dire and speedy peril. How can we compare candles and stars? If I want to find my way in obscure and winding cellarings I prefer the flicker of the friendly candle to the exalted radiance of the star. We can not all be stars, but it is essential to remember that if we are only common candles a ministry has been committed to us of which the star itself has been deprived.

But he not only ignored the unique ministry of the individual gift, he absolutely ignored the law of mental and spiritual increase in obedience to which a slender gift becomes enlarged. He wanted a harvest without husbandry, he wanted multiplication without work. He overlooked the great law

that gift is increased by faithfulness, and that expert power is acquired in the ways of obedience. *J. H. Jowett,* in *The Expositor.*

Faith and Faithfulness. The words "faith" and "faithfulness" seem different at first, as if the added syllables had changed the meaning of the original words. Faith is confidence in what can not now be seen. Faithfulness is constancy in the fulfillment of known duties. Yet what but faith can secure faithfulness? Being full of faith — faith in God and faith in men — makes it possible for us to be faithful in our daily work for God and for men. *Sunday School Times.*

Faithful over a Few Things. You were sent into this world to live your life with God. If He can come into this life of yours you ought to think well of it. It ought to be adorned and ennobled by His presence. All its daily duties, all its small delights — for there is no life so narrow that it has not room for the spirit of joy — should seem to you refined and uplifted by the divine participation in them. Let us get out of the false notion that the only way to be dignified is to be distinguished, the only way to be good is to be heroic, the only way to serve Christ is to do something big. Let us learn that the whole Christian life, whether it is lived on the scale of miles or of inches, is a beautiful and worthy life, and that what God requires of us is not to accomplish anything wonderful, but to do justice and love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. *Henry van Dyke,* in *The Open Door.*

Common, Faithful Lives. Certainly, in our own little sphere, it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the common people whom we know, it is not necessarily those who are busiest, not those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible charge or work. It is the lives like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. *Phillips Brooks.*

In one of the battles during the American Civil War, a young officer stood at a battery which had dwindled down to a single gun. That single gun he loaded again and again, and fired into the thick darkness upon aim that had been given him in the light. At last the bugles rang out the victory of his army; and, said he, "Then I knew that whatever others did, for me a victory meant keeping my own gun loaded and fired." Work in that spirit. Remember that "in God's army slackness is infamy." *F. W. Farrar.*

Forenoon and afternoon and night,
Forenoon and afternoon and night, —
Forenoon, and — what?
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is life; make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And time is conquered, and thy crown is won.

Edward Rowland Sill.

SENTENCE SERMONS

Men are born not merely for to-day, but for God's to-morrow. *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Our deeds still travel with us from afar
And what we have been makes us what we are. *George Eliot.*

Sow good services; sweet remembrances will grow from them. *Mme. de Staël.*

Fidelity is simply daring to be true in small things as well as great. *Van Dyke.*

If we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done. *John Lubbock.*

The best preparation for the future is the present well seen to, the last duty done. *George Macdonald.*

I can no more escape from my past than I can dismiss my shadow. *Purchase.*

Bury your conscientiousness in the field of your daily labor, and some day there will be flowers and fragrance fit for Heaven. *M. D. Babcock.*

The greatest thing in the world is a good man, and all good flows out of the spring called a great heart. *N. McGee Waters.*

There is waiting for you an inheritance — some promised Hebron, some gift of God's infinite love in Christ: it is for you to say, with the faith of a Caleb, "Give me this mountain." *F. B. Meyer.*

We carry our yesterdays with us as a part of the freightage of life, and there is no depot where that freightage can be set off; yesterday is in to-day and to-day will be in to-morrow. *R. F. Coyle.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. Prov. 16.31.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Psa. 92.12.

Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Gal. 6.9.

The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Prov. 16.33.

That which hath been is now: and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past. Eccles. 3.15.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. Psa. 37.37.

Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 6.12.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Just as surely as health in old age depends in part on the reserve strength laid by in youth, and wisdom in old age depends on the knowledge and experience stored by in the past, so does the peace of mind in old age depend on records engraved on the memory during youth and manhood. Would you have that peace of mind? Then,

"Heed how thou livest.
Do no act by day,
Which from the night
Shall drive thy peace away."

Would you have pleasant memories from day to day? Then do something or say something to-day, which you will remember with pleasure to-morrow.

THE LESSON STORY

There has come a lull in the prolonged warfare for the possession of Canaan, and Joshua now turns to the task of allotting the conquered land.

Before the final allotment, Caleb, with others of the tribe of Judah, come to Joshua and prefer a prior claim. He recalls their past, when Joshua and he had been the only ones of the spies to urge the conquest of Canaan thirty-eight years before they crossed the Jordan. "Thou knowest it all," he says to Joshua; because he had wholly followed Him, the Lord had commanded Moses to give him as his inheritance the region traversed by him when sent to spy the land. Besides this promise Caleb gives another reason for wishing this hill country about Hebron; the Anakim, fierce men of unusual strength and stature, dwell there, and their cities are great and fortified, and with God's help he covets the task of driving them out. His spirit is like that of Paul who said he would tarry longer at Ephesus because there were there many adversaries. Though Caleb is an old man, eighty-five years of age, he is as strong and ambitious as when the Exodus began. Very touching must have been the scene as Joshua blessed Caleb, the only man of his generation in all that nation who had come with him from Egypt, and granted his request.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. How the heart may be kept youthful in old age.

2. No thoughtful man ever came to the end of his life, and had time and a little space of calm in which to look back, who did not know that it was what he had done unselfishly for others, and nothing else, that satisfied him in the retrospect, and made him feel that he had played the man. *Woodrow Wilson.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. See Ex. 21.13 for the first hint in the Bible in regard to a place of refuge for the innocent slayer. 2. Where was there an asylum for every one? (1 Kings 1.50; 2.28.) 3. What early lesson referred to the custom of blood revenge? 4. Read the fuller accounts of the cities of refuge in Num. 35.9–34 and Deut. 19.1–13. 5. What does "unawares and unwittingly" mean as explained in the Mosaic legislation? 6. Read Matt. 5.38–42; 11.28–30. 7. Look up these New Testament references in regard to revenge: Matt. 5.44; Luke 6.28; Acts 7.60; Rom. 12.14. 8. Commit to memory either Psalm 46 or 91.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Dean Stanley aptly calls the remainder of the book of Joshua "The Geographical Manual of the Holy Land, The Domesday Book of the Conquest of Canaan." The districts assigned to each tribe are carefully given. When the tribe of Judah complained to Joshua that their inheritance was too small, he answered them: "Get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if Mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee." The encampment was moved to Shiloh, and the tabernacle set up there. After all the tribes had received their allotment, Joshua himself received a city in the hill country of Ephraim.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Joshua 20.1–9. (Read Num. 35.6–34.) Commit vv. 2, 3.

Golden Text

My refuge is in God. Psalm 62.7.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 20.1–9

1 The Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying,
2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:
3 That the slayer that killeth *any* person unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.
4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.
5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.
6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.
7 And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which *is* Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.
8 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.
9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

2. *Appoint out.* R. V., *assign. Cities.* R. V., *The cities.* Those already arranged for. *By the hand of Moses.* R. V., *by Moses.* See Ex. 21.13, 14; Num. 35.9–34; Deut. 19.1–13.

3. *Slayer.* R. V., *manslayer. Unawares and unwittingly.* Unintentionally. *They shall be.* This and the future verbs in verse 4 are all preterites in the Hebrew, as marking a system already established, but now only made available. *Crosby.*

4. *At the entering of the gate.* R. V., *at the entrance of the gate.* Where judgment was rendered.

7. *Appointed.* R. V., *set apart.* Margin, *sanctified. Galilee.* This is the first use of this term, so familiar in later history. The word means *circuit.* To how great a district it was given is unknown. *Mount.* R. V., *hill country.*

9. *At unawares.* R. V., *unwittingly.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *Appoint cities of refuge.* In the allotment of Canaan to the tribes, forty-

eight cities were given to the Levites, and of these thirteen were reserved for the family of Aaron and six were set apart as cities of refuge. The government of the cities was in the hands of a council of elders with judges, who must be priests. The open space near the gate was the place of assembly for the elders, and the court of the judges.

3. *The avenger of blood.* In the office of the *go-el,* or nearest of kin, there was much of a wholesome tendency. The feeling was deeply rooted in the Hebrew mind that the nearest of kin was the guardian of his brother's life, and for this reason he was bound to avenge his death; and instead of crossing this feeling, or seeking wholly to uproot it, the object of Moses was to place it under salutary checks, which should prevent it from inflicting gross injustice where no crime had really been committed. There was something both sacred and salutary in the relation of the *go-el* to his nearest of kin. When poverty obliged a man to dispose of his property, it was the *go-el* that was bound to intervene and "redeem" the property. The law served as a check to the cold spirit that is so ready to ask, in reference to one broken down, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It maintained a friendly relation between members of families that might otherwise have been entirely severed from each other. The avenging of blood was regarded as one of the duties resulting from this relation, and had this part of the duty been rudely or summarily superseded, the whole relationship, with all the friendly offices which it involved, might have suffered shipwreck. *William Garden Blaikie.*

4. *They shall take him into the city.* The terrible disappointment in self, the consciousness of sin, bursts or creeps in upon us, and then the hands for the first time are reached out for consolation, and the great doors — which we have hardly noticed as we passed and repassed on this side of the divine Nature, they were shut so close, and we saw so little need of entering this way — are flung wide open to take the tired and disappointed creature in. It is as if we had sailed gaily all day up and down a glorious coast, rejoicing in the winds that swept around its headlands and caught our sails, thinking the bolder the coast the better, never asking whether there was a place of refuge anywhere until at last the storm burst upon us, and then we never thought the coast so beautiful as when we saw her open an unexpected harbor and take us into still water behind the rocks that we have been glorying in, out of the tempest's reach. *Phillips Brooks.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

2. *Cities of Refuge.* Places of refuge where, under the cover of religion, the guilty and the unfortunate might find shelter and protection were not unknown among the ancient heathen. The *jus asyli,* or right of shelter and impunity was enjoyed by certain places reputed sacred, such as groves, temples, and altars. This protective power commonly spread itself over a considerable district round the holy spot, and was watched over and preserved by severe penalties. Among the Greeks and Romans the number of these places of asylum became very great, and led, by abuse, to a fresh increase of criminals. Tiberius, in consequence, caused a solemn inquiry into their effects to be made, which resulted in a dimunition of their number, and a limitation of their privileges.

This pagan custom passed into Christian custom. As early as Constantine the Great, Christian churches were asylums for the unfortunate persons whom an outraged law or powerful enemies pursued. Theodosius extended this privilege to the houses, gardens, and other places which were under the jurisdiction of the churches. This privilege prevailed in the whole of Catholic Christendom, and was preserved undiminished, at least in Italy, so long as the papal independence remained. *Biblical Encyclopedia.*

3. *The slayer may flee thither.* Every possible assistance was given the fugitive, according to the rabbis. The roads leading to the cities of refuge were made broad, at least thirty-two cubits wide, every obstruction was removed, every river was spanned by a bridge, at every turn there were guide posts bearing the words "Refuge, Refuge," and it was the duty of two men to run with the fugitive so as to endeavor to induce the avenger, in case he overtook them, to permit the slayer to have a legal trial.

3. *The avenger of blood.* The high estimation in which blood-revenge stood among the ancient Arabs may be judged from the fact that it formed the subject of their most beautiful and elevated poetry. Mohammed did not abolish, but modified that vigorous custom, by allowing the acceptance of a ransom in money for the forfeited life of the murderer. It was, and even still is, a common practice among nations of patriarchal habits, that the nearest of kin should, as a matter of duty, avenge the death of a murdered relative. Among the Bedouins and other Arab tribes, should the offer of blood-money be refused, the *Thar,* or law of blood, comes into operation, and any person within the fifth degree of blood from the homicide may be legally killed by any one within the same degree of consanguinity to the victim. Frequently the homicide will wander from tent to tent over the desert begging contributions to pay the apportioned blood-money. Three days and four hours are allowed to the persons included within the *Thar* for escape. The right of blood-revenge is never lost, except as annulled by compensation: it descends to the latest generation. *Biblical Encyclopedia.*

6. *He shall dwell in that city until the death of the high priest.* A place of abode was given him and he was taught to support himself. The death of the high priest was chosen to limit the time of his exile in the city of refuge, as probably by that time the relatives of the slain man would consider that justice had been meted out to the slayer. Then, too, it was a general custom in ancient times to grant pardon to certain prisoners on the death of a ruler, and among the Israelites the high priest was the spiritual ruler. According to the rabbis, the mother of the high priest fed and clothed the fugitives well that they might not pray for the death of her son, so as to obtain freedom.

6. *Until he stand before the congregation for judgment.* It has always been the oriental custom for those conducting an examination of a prisoner to remained seated, while the prisoner himself stood before them.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Cities of refuge, paragraph 153; review, paragraphs 104–115.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. What is the color of the fox in our country?

Do you know what the color of a fox in the Arctic region is? During the winter, when there is snow everywhere, the Arctic fox has a white coat, but in summer-time, when the snow has disappeared, he has a new coat of dark brown hair. The color of his coat, which looks so much like the snow in winter and like the ground in summer, is a protection to him, so that he is not easily seen by his enemies. The protective color in animals, as it is called, is a very interesting study. Travelers tell us that along the Amazon River there is a huge spider which feeds on birds. The coarse grey hairs which cover its body so closely match in color the trunk of the tree in some crevice of which it hides, that it escapes the notice of the birds. The lizard there that lives in the houses is ashy gray in color like the ceiling to which it clings, the lizard whose home is among the stone walls is darker to match the stones and mud, while the lizard that lives in the forests is as green as the leaves among which it hides.

This protective coloring has been given to animals and insects in order to save them from being killed off too rapidly by their enemies. Should not human beings have some special provision made for their safety from their enemies? The Israelites whose history we are studying, had many customs very different from ours. In the lessons about Cain and Abel, and Esau and Jacob, what did we learn was the custom in regard to killing a murderer? If a man killed another one accidentally his life, too, was at the mercy of the relatives of the dead man, and to save him from death Moses arranged that special places of refuge should be set apart for him, and Joshua carried out the plan after they reached Canaan.

For Older Pupils. The desire for revenge has always been strong in human nature. What a history has the vandetta had in Corsica and Sardinia! One historian estimates that twenty-eight thousand Corsicans perished in the space of thirty years because of this custom. In the county of Tipperary, Ireland, two men quarreled over the age of a colt, and one man killed the other. The relatives avenged the murder, and then the relatives of the second murdered man avenged that murder. This vengeance continued until a century afterwards the Catholic Church ended the warfare between the "Three Year Olds" and the "Four Year Olds."

In former days a man who had killed another might take refuge in a sanctuary" or church in England, and be safe as long as he stayed there. On the door-way of Durham Cathedral there is a heavy iron knocker, and in the early, turbulent days there was a gate-keeper stationed day and night in a lodge within to answer the appeal of that knocker.

Very early in the history of the Israelites the need was felt of some place of refuge for those who accidentally killed another, and thus were not deserving of the summary justice meted out to a wilful murderer by the "blood-avenger."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I My Refuge is in God

God a Refuge from Inward as well as Outward Perils. On the main street of the town of Deerfield, Massachusetts, there long stood a palisaded block-house which escaped the conflagration that destroyed the town on a

dreadful night in the winter of 1703. Into that house had fled all those of the inhabitants who escaped massacre or captivity at the hands of the savages, and they held the enemy at bay until he found it wisest to retreat toward Canada. We of quieter days, who have not been in the peril of a human enemy for an hour of our lives, find it hard to realize what life was under conditions like those. But the Psalmist when he wrote "God is our refuge," knew it, for life in most periods of Jewish history was as much exposed as on an American frontier in Colonial times. They knew, as we do not, what gracious associations clung to that word "refuge," and when they used it as a name of God Himself, it was with a thankfulness and a joy beyond utterance.

That God was, in the first place, a source of safety from outward perils, there is no doubt was their meaning. But they had got farther than the sense of merely outward perils when the Psalms were written. They had come to perceive that life had deadlier foes than the Bedouin or the Philistine, that there were enemies who struck at their truest life, disturbing their peace, undermining their faith, obscuring their vision of God, paralyzing their wills for good. More important to them than the hill fort, to which they fled when danger from without came upon the land, was the unseen refuge to which they might escape from their sins and temptations and distresses of spirit, finding safety in God. *Editorial* in *Sunday School Times.*

The Need of Refuge. As the armed force, spent by the hard encounter of the field, wants to be gathered into some fortified camp, there to recruit by rest and sleep, so it is necessary for the Christian to find some strong habitation to which he may resort and cease for a time from the struggle. Nobody human bears a perpetual strain. Even the stoutest hero needs at times to be a quietist, resting in God. It needs to be with him as it was with Moses when he was bearing the burden or charge of his people — to be called up often into the Mount above the smoke and noisy turmoil of his cares, and to be shut in with God in the glorious height of his friendship, there to be rested and refreshed and come down with a face radiating God's light, to review his work and reassume his burden. *Horace Bushnell.*

Our God is Able to Deliver Us. God hath a thousand keys to open a thousand doors for the deliverance of His own when it has come to the greatest extremity. Let us be faithful and care for our own part, which is to do and suffer for Him, and lay God's part on Himself, and leave it there; duties are ours, events are the Lord's. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to hold a court (if I may so speak) upon God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt Thou do this or that?" we lose ground, we have nothing to do there; it is our part to let the Almighty exercise His own office and steer His own helm. *Samuel Rutherford.*

Underneath are the Everlasting Arms. A Boston minister was requested to visit a sick girl who lived alone with her mother in a small apartment. The family was evidently poor, but not in need, save of comfort and friendship. It was evident that the girl had not many days to live. The minister talked with them and prayed with them, in the hope that he might give them a feeling of friendship in their loneliness and of hope in their sorrow.

He noticed that the girl looked most uncomfortable as she lay propped up in bed. "Let me lift you into a little more comfortable position," said he. He lifted her easily for she was light and frail and he was strong. Then he laid her back upon the cool side of the bed, and she fell asleep.

The minister arranged with a nurse to come in for an hour or two each afternoon, to assist the mother and give her an opportunity to rest. He did not see the girl again until he came to attend the funeral, but they told him how, every day, she had recalled the feeling of comfort and of peace with which she lay back on the pillows on the occasion of his visit to them.

"There was such a sense of comfort and security," she said, "to be lifted up by some one so strong that it seemed no strain, and to be laid back so gently. I never had such a feeling of perfect peace, and it made me think of the 'peace that passeth all understanding,' and of the uplifting strength of my Heavenly Father." The thought, although it may not have entered her mind before, kept recurring to her, now that the mind was open to receive it; and the comfort was still with her when the end came; a feeling of peace and security, of rest and undisturbed trust; and when the nurse read to her, "The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," she smiled, for she understood. *Youth's Companion.*

If the wren can cling
To a spray a-swing
In the mad May wind, and sing and sing
As if she'd burst for joy,—
Why cannot I
Contented lie
In His quiet arms, beneath His sky,
Unmoved by Life's annoy?

Robert Haven Shauffler in *Outlook.*

II The Sanctity of Human Life

Thou Shalt not Kill. Is there anything in the modern conception of a man which bids me spare him, if his existence dooms me to poverty and I can quietly push him over a precipice? It is quite conceivable that I can prove, and very likely indeed that I can persuade myself, that the shortening of the life of one hard, grasping man may brighten the lives of hundreds. And my passions will simply laugh at the attempt to restrain me by arguing that great advantages result from the respect for human life upon the whole. They grant the general proposition, but add that every rule has its exceptions. Something more is needed; something which can never be obtained except from a universal law, from the sanctity of all human lives as bearing eternal issues in their bosom, and from the certainty that He who gave the mandate, "Thou shalt not kill," will enforce it.

It is when we see in our fellow-man a divine creature of the Divine, made by God in His own image, marred and defaced by sin, but not beyond recovery, when his actions are regarded as wrought in the sight of a Judge whose presence supersedes utterly the inadequacy of our judgment and our vengeance, and when his death is solemn as the unveiling of unknown and unending destinies, then it is that we discern the sacredness of life, and the awful presumption of the deed which quenches it. *G. A. Chadwick.*

Give human nature reverence, for the sake
Of One who bore it, making it divine
With the ineffable tenderness of God. *Whittier.*

Every One's Life is Sacred. Gibbon has told us in his *History of Rome* that the law allowed a murder to be paid for, and different prices were affixed for the value of men. Nine hundred pieces of gold was the price of a Roman citizen. The national inequality established by the Franks, in their criminal proceedings, was the last insult of the conquest of Rome. They solemnly affirmed that the life of a Roman was of smaller value than that of a barbarian. The life of the most illustrious Frank was appreciated at the sum of six hundred pieces of gold; while the noble provincial, who was admitted to the King's table, might be legally murdered at the expense of three hundred pieces. Two hundred was deemed sufficient for the ordinary Frank, but the Roman value was one hundred, or even fifty pieces of gold.

It is the proud boast of all civilized countries to-day that every man's life is sacred, and that one man's life is as sacred as another's. The ancient Spartans killed their sickly and deformed children, and there is a survival of this pagan idea in the occasional advocacy now of putting out the life of the old and hopelessly sick.

Self-Murder. During the rule of the early Cæsars in Rome a favorite topic of discussion was the best means for putting an end to life, and an invitation to a Roman banquet often meant, it is said, "to supper and to suicide." Wherever Christianity came into contact with the ancient civilization it had to fight the two evils of suicide and infanticide.

A recent New York paper summarizes the suicides in that city, fifteen in number in one day, and gives the causes from a school-girl's scolding, to the loss of property and position. While pagan moralists could defend suicide because of the dimness of their light, Christians believe that God is in the world, that their lives are gifts from God, and that they are in God's world for a purpose, and that to refuse to live, therefore, is not only cowardly but a defiance of God Himself.

Other Forms of Suicide. Suicide includes much more than the determined taking away of life; everything that unlawfully dulls the sensibilities is in the nature of suicide. . . . To fly to drink, or to narcotics, is to take the life as truly as if we plunged the sword into the heart. No matter how slow the benumbing process may be, it is the destruction of the higher nature, and therefore is in the direction of self-murder. . . . Suicide in every form is simply atheism. There is no need to enlarge on its cruelty, on its cowardice, on its folly. It is an act impossible to any who have a God in the world. *W. Robert Nicoll.*

III Vengeance is Mine

The Growth of Moral Standards. In the letter of Paul to the Romans there is a striking illustration of the growth of moral standards, when we take periods long intervals apart, and compare them with each other. Paul is advising his Roman converts to live at peace with each other, and to give place unto wrath. The reason he gives for so doing is that "Vengeance belongs to God." He pleads for a change of venue from the human to the divine tribunal. Yet the very phrase, on the ground of which he makes his appeal, is a quotation from an ancient battle-song of the Israelites, and when we turn back to that battle-song, we see that it is not at all a contrast between divine and human vengeance but rather the certainty that Israel's God was Himself a vengeance-

seeking God. It attributes to God those qualities of vindictiveness, of jealousy, and of hate which men so naturally felt toward their human foes, and which inevitably they reflected into the character of their divinity. But when Paul snatches a phrase out of this early battle-song, charged, as it is, with the spirit of revenge, he does it that he may put to rest in the hearts of his friends this very spirit of revenge. He appeals from the blindness and prejudice of men, vindicating their own interests, to the wider vision and the impartial sentence of the One who regards the hearts of all mankind.

What is it to forgive any one who has done us, individually, an injustice and a wrong? To cancel ourselves out, to sit down hard on our own dislikes, our own malices, our own vengeance, and perhaps most often on our own small vanity and pride, — this is the very heart of forgiveness; and this doubtless is most often what we mean when we say we can not forgive.

We feel that we can not forgive because we are so important and so large. It is in reality because we are so unimportant and so small. It is always a dignified procedure to appeal, stage by stage, from the court of some petty justice of the peace to the supreme tribunal of the land, but it would be a humiliating anti-climax to reverse the order. Yet no more humiliating than it is to appeal from the tribunal of that impartial court of universal laws, over whose portal is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," to those little police courts of our tawdry hurts, our little prides, our poor and pitiless wishes to humiliate our fellow-being. *Frederick E. Dewhurst.*

God's Gradual Dealings with Men. The savage instinct of revenge is to rush blindly in, and do as much harm to an enemy as can be done. The savage satisfies himself to the full; he kills the man that has done him wrong and his wife and family. Now nothing is more striking in the old covenant than that it checks barbarous habits and puts them under restraint. The Mosaic law stands by, as it were, as a policeman, and says, "An eye? is that the wrong done? Then an eye must be put out in return; but no more. You must stop there." The point which needs emphasizing is that the old law worked by way of gradual limitation, not of sudden abolition. God dealt with men gradually. Their savage passions under the Old Testament are restrained under the Old Testament as a preparation for the time when they were to be brought under the perfect discipline of the Son of Man. When the fulness of time came, our Lord laid on this passion of revenge a harder and deeper prescription, and said to each of His disciples: "A wrong aimed at thee as an individual is, so far as thy feeling goes, simply to be an occasion for showing complete liberty of spirit and superiority to all outrage." The Lord required not moderation in revenge, but complete self-effacement. *Charles Gore.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

A feeling of revenge is not worth much, that you should care to keep it. *Philip Wakem.*

Wickedness and injustice lie in the intentions. *Aristotle.*

A wise man forgets old grudges. *Chinese Proverb.*

Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. *Francis Bacon.*

Hatred and revenge never harm any one so much as the hater himself, and still he is unwilling to let his destroyer go. *Sunday School Times.*

God's promises are like the boughs of a tree bending over a river, for His half-drowned children to lay hold of. *Samuel Rutherford.*

There is no method of obtaining God's protection but by adherence to His laws. *William E. Channing.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. Prov. 18.10.

O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself. Psa. 94.1.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. Psa. 18.2, 3.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matt. 5.38, 39.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8.36.

Then said Jesus, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23.34.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

"A fast-set hill-fort is our God,
A goodly shield and weapon,
He helps us out of every need
That hath His folk o'ertaken."

This was Luther's song of victory, written in 1530 during his stay in Castle Coburg, a "hill-fort" made famous during the Thirty Years' War.

Its grand words of unwavering trust in God have cheered the hearts of countless multitudes of Christians from that day to this. Very often from the lips of Moslems this same thought is heard in their beautiful expression, "I take refuge with God." Not alone in times of sorrow and temptation, but alike in times of gladness and calmness should we take refuge with God, there to grow braver and stronger and better able to make our lives more nearly what He would have them be. "Trust in Him at all times. Pour out your heart before Him."

THE LESSON STORY

Among the Israelites it had been the custom from the earliest times for the nearest relative of a murdered man to seek the murderer and slay him if possible. As we have already seen in so many instances, God was educating His people gradually to a knowledge of right living, and while the time had not yet come to abolish the custom of blood revenge, it had come to mitigate it by establishing cities of refuge as had been planned for by Moses. Joshua told the people to appoint these cities. Three were chosen west and three

east of the Jordan River; on the west: Kedesh on the north, Shechem in the center, and Hebron on the south; and on the east: Golan in the north, Ramoth in the center, and Bezer in the south,— the six so located that there was one within easy reach of every part of the land.

These cities were designed, not for the wilful murderer — as were the places of sanctuary among the Greeks and Romans — but for the one who might unintentionally kill another. The slayer who succeeded in reaching the gate of one of these cities before the blood avenger overtook him, was met there by the elders of the city, who listened to his self-defense, and admitted him into the city if satisfied that he had killed his neighbor unawares. The guilty murderer was handed over to the blood avenger. The innocent fugitive was taken into the city and temporarily given a free dwelling-place. A later and more thorough investigation of his case was held "before the congregation," perhaps in the fugitive's own city in the presence of the murdered man's relatives. If acquitted by this tribunal of intent to kill, he was restored to the city of refuge there to remain till, on the death of the high priest, he was free to return to his own city.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Should the death penalty be inflicted for murder?

2. Belief in the sacredness of human life is due to the Christian religion. Said a man convicted of murder in the first degree: "Not believing in anything, I never thought much of killing, so long as I didn't get caught."

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. With verse 27 compare Gen. 4.10; Job 31.38; Hab. 2.11; Luke 19.40. 2. What prophet was born at Abel-meholah? (1 Kings 19.16.) 3. What earlier events were commemorated by the erection of stones? (First lesson, second quarter; second lesson, fourth quarter.) 4. When were the Israelites as a nation first pledged to make a deliberate choice of Jehovah? (Ex. 19.1–8.) 5. Where was the covenant renewed as narrated in the next lesson? (Josh. 34.1.) 6. What earlier events occurred at Shechem? (Gen. 12.6, 7; 33.18–20; 35.1–8; Josh. 8.30–35.) 7. Read the preface to the Ten Commandments. (Ex. 20.2; Deut. 5.1–6.) 8. Read the last appeal of Moses to the people, Deut. 29.30, and the last speech of Stephen, Acts 7. 9. What was the choice made by the rich young ruler? (Matt. 19.16–22.) 10. Is it possible neither to choose nor refuse to serve God? (Luke 11.23.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Forty-eight cities were given the Levites from the possessions of the other tribes. The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who had helped the other tribes in the conquest of the land, were given Joshua's blessing and allowed to return to their territory east of the Jordan. On the way they erected a memorial altar, which the other tribes thought was intended for idolatrous worship, but they convinced the others that it was "A witness between us that the Lord is God."

JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL

Joshua 24.14–28. (Read Joshua 23, 24.) Commit vv.22–24.

Golden Text

Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. Joshua 24.15.

LESSON TEXT Joshua 24.14–28

14 Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods;

17 For the Lord our God, he *it is* that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the Lord; for he *is* our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he *is* a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the Lord.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord to serve him. And they said, *We are* witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the Lord.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest you deny your God.

28 So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14. *Now therefore.* Because of what God had done for them, as rehearsed in the earlier verses of this chapter. See also verse 17. *Your fathers.* Not Abraham, but his relations are said to have worshiped idols in Mesopotamia. *On the other side of the flood.* R. V., *beyond the river.* The Euphrates.

15. *If it seem evil unto you.* If it is not your will and pleasure. *Whether-or.* The choice then is between the gods of Mesopotamia and of Canaan, for they must that day decide once for all whom they would serve.

16. *The people answered.* Through their officers. See verse 1. *God forbid.* R. V., *far be it from us.*

17. The reason for their choice stated in verse 16. *Through whom.* R. V., *through the midst of whom.*

18. *Drave.* R. V., *drove. Also.* They as well as Joshua.

19. *Ye cannot serve the Lord.* Dillmann suggests that the words "and other gods" have fallen out here. "Unless ye put away the other gods" is implied.

20. *Strange.* R. V., *foreign. Do you hurt.* R. V., *do you evil.* Compare Josh. 23.15, 16.

22. *Witnesses against yourselves.* In the event of their failing to keep their vow, their own consciences would condemn them.

23. *Now therefore put away the strange gods.* A man's promise to serve God soon loses its moral hold of his conscience, if he does not instantaneously put it in practice. *Clarke.*

24. *His voice will we obey.* R. V., *unto His voice will we hearken.*

25. *Joshua made a covenant with the people.* He remembered the covenant concluded on Sinai by God with Israel (Ex. 19.20) in like manner as Moses had done (Deut. 29.1) in the field of Moab. *Fay. Statute and ordinance.* See Ex. 15.25.

26. *The book of the law.* See Deut. 31.26. *Under an oak.* R. V., *under the oak.* Perhaps a reference to the oak and altar of Abraham, Gen. 12.6, 7 (wrongly translated "plain" in the Authorized Version). See also Gen. 33.18–20 and 35.4.

27. *It hath heard all the words of the Lord.* Compare Josh. 22.34; Hab. 2.11 and Luke 19.40.

28. *Let the people depart.* R. V., *sent the people away.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *The people answered.* In great emergencies Moses called together the chiefs of the tribes — the heads of families, and all the priests and officers and the people, and proclaimed the law and the policy, and rolled the responsibility upon them all. In some cases it took place in a dramatic form. It did when, in fulfillment of the command of Moses, the tribes were gathered between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal, and the whole law was read to them, and they said Amen to the blessings that were to follow obedience, and Amen to the curses that were to follow disobedience. That was, in some sense, putting to vote to the whole assembled nation, as represented by its men, and preëminently by its chief men, the question of natural fidelity to God and natural fealty to law. Now, it is not to be supposed, as the population at that time amounted to vast numbers of people, that there could be a single assembly in which one man could address them all. The proclamation was probably made after this fashion: Joshua, or whoever was the chief and responsible magistrate, gathered in groups the priests and officers, and told them what was to be said to the people, and they in turn declared to their tribes or sections the word that was spoken to them. From them it was distributed to the great crowd. And then, at some signal, the voice of the whole people — men, women and

children — was lifted up, and with thunder, and acclamation such as probably has never been known in any nation since, they all bore witness, and gave their solemn vows — covenants — committing themselves both to the Law and to the procedures that were to fall out under that law. *Beecher.*

18. *Therefore will we also serve the Lord.* All this sounded very well, and looked very hopeful. They seemed to have a clear sense of the moral basis of Jehovah's claim upon them for implicit obedience. They could accurately recount all His mighty deeds on their behalf, and made very earnest and no doubt sincere protestations against idolatry, and promises of obedience to Jehovah, their God. But it is very evident that Joshua was not particularly sanguine about all this profession. The promises, vows, and resolutions made under the powerful influence of Joshua's appeal soon proved to be like the early dew and the morning cloud, that passeth away. See Judges 2.7–13. *C. H. Mackintosh.*

Egyptian Gods

21. *Nay, but we will serve the Lord.* What a commentary on these proud words as given by the Book of Judges! Serve the Lord! The very first sentence which follows the record of Joshua's death in that book tells us that "the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim; and they forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers." And this record recurs with melancholy monotony on nearly every page. We are reminded of that other scene when beneath Sinai, burning with fire, the people pledged themselves to do all that the Lord had spoken; and within six weeks were worshiping Him under the form of a calf.

In point of fact, resolution, however good and however strongly expressed, is not sufficient to carry us forward into a life of obedience. . . . Thus it is that so often young hearts are embittered with disappointment, because in some high moment of resolve they determine that all life shall be new, inspired by constant resolve; but when they descend to the plane of the commonplace, to the routine of daily life, they discover that the impetus has died away, and that the power to execute the high purpose of the soul is gone. No; consecration is only possible when it is conceived, prosecuted, and consummated in power not our own, and in the energy of the Holy Spirit. *B. F. Meyer, Joshua.*

27. *This stone shall be a witness unto us.* What was the witness of that stone? It was the necessity and the blessing of obedience to God. That was what God had commanded. That was what the people had sworn. That was what the stone had heard and what it bore perpetual witness of afterward to those who passed it and heard with their consciences its silent voice; that not by his own will, but in subjection to a Will far greater than his own, the Jew was to occupy this land and to live the new life which was before him. And not merely this stone, but every monument which had drunk in his nation's history and stood to utter it perpetually, had the same tale to tell. The rock where Abraham had carried up his son and stood with the knife ready to complete the dreadful sacrifice; the stone at Bethel where Jacob vowed his vow of conse-

cration; the twelve stones that the Jews had piled in the bed of the Jordan when they crossed dry-shod,—they all told the same story; they all meant the same thing. It was that Jewish truth of covenant. Since God has done this for us, we belong to Him, we hereby acknowledge His ownership and give ourselves to His service.

It is no fancy, certainly, to say that there are always people who are to the world they live in, what that stone in Shechem was to the nation in the midst of which it stood. . . . Men who would not own God's judgments directly, own God's judgments as they come through them. They purify and bless the circle, the community in which they live, as that stone under the oak at Shechem must have seemed to purify and bless the whole land of Israel. *Phillips Brooks.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

26. *And Joshua took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak.* Throughout the Orient it was customary to keep a difficult deed or unusual event in mind by some sort of public monument. Much of all that we know about the acts of the Chaldeans and the Assyrians on the one hand, and of the Egyptians on the other, is derived from their memorial stones, and when the Hebrews raised their simpler tokens of remembrance, they only yielded to the common instinct of humanity.

The occasions which led men in olden times to establish memorials were extremely diverse, ranging all the way from the signal answer of Samuel's prayer, who "took a stone, and set it up, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," to the mere vanity of Sennacharib, who brags:

> "A tablet I caused to make, and
> The glory acquired by my hand, which over them
> I had gained, upon it I caused to write, and
> In the midst of the city I set it up." *J. A. Paine.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Shechem, paragraph 136; the people in Canaan, paragraphs 116–126.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Did you ever tell a playmate that you would do a certain thing for him if he would do a certain thing for you? You made an agreement with one another, and if you failed to keep your part of the agreement was your playmate bound to keep his part? In the Bible, we read of agreements, or covenants, as they are called, between God and His people. God's promises, like your promises in an agreement, are conditional, they depend on the obedience, or faith, of His people. What is the title of our lesson? When did we first hear about a covenant made by God? (Review Lesson VIII, first quarter.)

For Older Pupils. Under the leadership of Joshua we have seen the Israelities wage their courageous conquest of Canaan, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, and from the desert on the south to Mount Lebanon on the

north. With wonderful singleness of purpose, and decisiveness of action, Joshua has led this victorious warfare. Realizing now in a good old age that his end is near, and knowing full well the dangers that beset his people surrounded by idolatrous nations, he desires, like Moses before him, to give them his parting words of counsel. What had been Moses' last message? (Lesson XI, third quarter.)

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Choose ye This Day Whom ye will serve

There can be No Compromise. Moses made no attempt at compromise between Osiris and Jehovah, or the court and the brick kiln. It was a choice without precedent or promise — a preference for God's plan, or the one laid out by the world. It was renouncing what others held without rebuke, because of a higher purpose which had forced itself into his soul, similar to the choice some one is ever making "twixt the darkness and the light."

Jesus turned such a corner of experience when all the kingdoms of earth were made to pass before Him. We never will know the full strength of that temptation as it touched the wondrous Man who stood in the focus of prophecy, but no rift has ever been made in any cloud, never has the world suddenly grown larger as life's possibilities have been revealed, that it has not been as full of peril as it has been of exhilaration. It has been a devil's chance as well as a man's opportunity. Both Moses and Jesus turned from the crown to the cross. They chose goodness rather than greatness.

No one can make the highest choice in life without exercising the highest faculties of the soul. When the intellect submits to faith, and the heart submits to love, and the will to obedience, the angels of God begin to minister to another heir of the World's Conqueror.

Every day is a Judgment Day in miniature. There are destiny lines crossing every path. It is really a choice between the "broad" and the "narrow" way which Jesus described. The many paths of life resolve themselves into just two ways in the perspective of eternity. This is not theology more than it is philosophy; not moral arbitrariness, but the tyranny of law. *James M. Thoburn, Jr.*

To him who stands at parting ways,
Whom choice confronts of this or that —
The level path through pleasant days,
The heights the saints are toiling at —
Godspeed! and may he never rue
The road he chooses of the two.

. . . . . .

Oh youth, with spirit pledged, yet free
To make of life the truest, best,
One sure, safe path there is for thee,
The path our Saviour trod and blessed.
There walk, and thou shalt surely find
The truest good — a peaceful mind.

James Buckham, in *A Wayside Altar.*

Any Time is No Time. This homely proverb, any time is no time, is a

very true one. How easy it is to see that a choice must be made as to whom we shall serve, to acknowledge that "some time" we shall make that choice, and to forget all about the vaguely felt truth and our resolution in regard to it, a wholly meaningless resolution because wholly indefinite. Some time — to-morrow — is no time.

"To-morrow," says George H. Hubbard, "is the most wonderful of days, or, as Isaiah has it, 'a day great beyond measure.' It is the day when every man does his duty. It is the harvest time of good intentions. To-morrow bad habits will be resolutely overcome, evil tempers conquered. To-morrow countless numbers of people will heed the call of Christ. To-morrow they will follow Him, and they will give themselves wholly to His service, they will put forth unsparing effort, they will make willing and joyous sacrifices, they will stand boldly for the right though the heavens fall, they will ally themselves with the Christian Church, they will — but the vision enlarges itself beyond the power of expression."

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," are Joshua's words to his people. The message to every one is always to-day, never to-morrow. Napoleon's army was in Moscow. Officers and soldiers and gay women were dancing in a Russian nobleman's palace when the city was set on fire. Nearer and nearer the fire approached their fortress, but there would be time enough to escape, they said, when the adjoining buildings were in flames. Those buildings blazed, their own castle caught on fire, and still there was some one who cried out, "Yet one more dance and defiance to the flames." The music and the dance went on. "Fly for your life! The fire has reached the magazine!" rang forth the cry. Then faces blanched with terror. The powder stored in the vault exploded, and all perished miserably. Such risks they take who say, "I will decide for Christ by and by." "To-morrow, to-morrow, always to-morrow! till by to-morrow's road we are at Never — and the chance is gone, and the dream has vanished, and the hope is dead. It will never be easier to come to Christ than now. It will never be easier to make the start than now. God says 'To-day.'"

II Monumental Stones

Sermons in Stones. When the great poet said that there were sermons in stones he told a truth greater than he knew. The patriarch who set up a stone as a monument to the Divine Presence simply did what God had done a million times before. God had carved His writings, His power, His omniscience, yea, His righteousness, upon every rock and tree. The old biblical writers who heard the Almighty in the voice of the stones and saw the dust of His feet in every cloud were not mere poetic rhapsodists. They were faithful to the truth, a truth that modern scholars are just beginning to learn. *Presbyterian Journal.*

The Power of Association of Ideas. Joshua's rock was transformed by the power of association; one hour it was a great, dead stone, as silent and uninspired as any other of the stones among which it lay. The next hour it had been taken up and separated from all its mates for ever, a sacred stone, a fountain of inspiration, a fire of poetry and life. It was the association with the solemn, self-consecration of the Jews which had transformed it. And our association is always the transforming power.

It ought to be harder and harder for men to do wrong the older that they grow. For all around them ought to gather the restraining power of associations. The voice of the Lord ought to speak out of more and more of the things about us, bearing a continual witness to us, lest we "deny our God." . . . Oh, as we grow in life, the world ought to be becoming to us more and more full of monumental pictures of human nobleness, patience, self-sacrifice, courage, meekness, so that we shall be more and more sure that goodness and heroism are possible for man. *Phillips Brooks.*

Living Stones. The architect of St. Paul's cathedral is buried there, and over his tomb is this inscription: *"Si monumentum requiris, circumspice"*—If you seek his monument, look around you. It is a solemn thought that we are living monuments to others, stones of influence by what we are as well as by what we do.

When Stopford Brooks was writing the biography of Frederick W. Robertson he went to Brighton in search of information. Going into a book store he asked the owner if he remembered anything interesting about Mr. Robertson. The book-seller took Mr. Brooks into another room and pointing to a picture of the great preacher hanging on the wall, said, "Whenever I am tempted to do anything mean, I just run in here and look at that picture, and the pure face recalls me to my better self."

III The Figurative Element in the Bible

The Commonness of Figurative Speech. The word "crook" means a bend, or curve, and it was given to anything with a curved end, like a shepherd's crook. We have the word "crook" as applied to a person. What does it mean? When we speak of "a crooked man" we do not mean one whose body is twisted, but one whose doings will not bear examination. When we say a man is "level-headed," do we mean that the top of his head presents a flat surface? The figurative words in our language are often so common that we forget they are figurative, but we do not make the mistake of taking them literally. Quite otherwise is it often with our understanding of the figurative language of the Bible, which is oriental imagery, and often unlike our western imagery. We are in danger of making the mistake of little Pip in *Great Expectations,* who heard his sister speak so often of bringing him up by hand, and always thought she meant the use she made upon him of her "hard and heavy hand."

No one will suppose Joshua meant that the stone, which he set up as a memorial, could hear, although he says, "it hath heard all the words of the Lord." It is a childlike figure of speech which he uses; and one that is very common in the Bible language, a figure which speaks of things without life as if they had life.

The Necessity of Figurative Language. The books of Scripture were written, as all books always have been written since the world began, with the object of being understood; and the starting-point of all real exposition must always be the sense which the words would have borne among those to whom they were primarily addressed.

There is in geometry a line known as the asymptote, which continually approaches to a curve, but, even when produced to infinity, does not intersect it, though the distance between the asymptote and the curve becomes, in the

course of this approach, less than any assignable quantity. Now language, in relation to thought, is never more than an asymptote. Language and thought can no more exactly coincide than two particles of matter can absolutely touch each other.

Now, if this be true in general, how much more true is it of any language in which we speak of God. We know that God is a Spirit. The untrained imagination of the world's childhood could not conceive of a bodiless and omnipresent spirit. It was necessary, therefore, for the sacred writers to speak of God as if He had a human body; and that is what is called anthropomorphism.

"And the Lord smelled the sweet savor; and the Lord said in His heart." (Gen. 8.21.)

"And the Lord said, . . . I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it." (Gen. 18.20, 21.)

But if harm was done by the crude errors of the heresy which insisted on exact literalism, and declared that the Trinity wore a human form, perhaps even deadlier evil arose from the imperfection of language which is technically called anthropopathy; namely, the attribution to God of human passions.

Thus we read in Scripture:

"It repented the Lord that he had made man." (Gen. 6.6.)

"I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." (Exod. 20.5.)

"I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my fury." (Isa. 63.3.)

When in our loose, one-sided, inaccurate metaphors we press the many passages of Scripture in which we are told that God "repented," or "changed His mind" or "regretted" something which He had previously done, we must be careful lest we wholly desecrate the conceptions of Him who is immutable, who says, "I am the Lord; I change not:" of whom we are expressly told: "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent."

"Theology and poetry," says Boccaccio, in his *Life of Dante,* "may be said to be almost one when their subject is the same; nay, more, I say that theology is nothing but God's poetry. For what is it but a kind of poetic invention, when in the Scripture, Christ is spoken of at one time as a lion, at another as a lamb; sometimes as a worm, at other times as a dragon, at others as a rock, and in many other ways, to recite all of which would be tedious? What else are the words of Scripture in the Gospel but a discourse of what is beyond the senses, which manner of speaking we, in more ordinary language, call allegory? *F. W. Farrar,* in *Sunday School Times.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

Choice and service — in these are the whole of life. *Mark Hopkins.*

Not to resolve to be is to resolve not to be. *Maclaren.*

Look out for choices; they run into habit, character, destiny. *Babcock.*

It is not enough to receive God's truth, we must retain and walk in it. *Clarke.*

You must take life; the only choice is how. *Beecher.*

We have no liberty to choose whether we will serve or no; all the liberty we have is to choose our master. *Sanderson.*

Man can not escape responsibility of choice; it faces him at ever moment

of his life, most of all in those beautiful and strenuous days when the bases of his manhood are being laid: then it is that he ought to seek the Kingdom of God that he may win the noblest manhood. *Fairbairn.*

All along the pathway of life are tombstones, by the side of which we have promised to strive for Him. *Moody.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Psa. 2.11.

God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4.24.

No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matt. 6.24.

Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. 1 Chron. 28.9.

How long halt ye between two opinions? 1 Kings 18.21.

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Cor. 6.2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. Choice and service were required of the Israelites, and choice and service are required of you. The choice and service is not for the future; it is for to-day. No one can escape the responsibility of making that choice. To every one God says, "Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death." After a battle with Pompey in which so many thousands lost their lives, Cæsar stood on the battle-field and sadly exclaimed, "Alas! He would have it so." If yours is the way of death, it is because you would have it so.

THE LESSON STORY

When one hundred and ten years old, Joshua realized that he must "go the way of all the earth." His parting words to his people are given in the last two chapters of the book of Joshua. He reminded them of what God had done for them, "The Lord your God he it is that fighteth for you"—and of the rewards for loyalty and the punishments for disobedience which should be theirs. Then he briefly reviewed their life as a people from the time of Abraham to the present when they were in the possession of cities which they built not and vineyards and olive yards which they planted not. Because of all God's benefits to them they owed Him faithful, sincere, undivided service. Over against the ancestral gods worshiped beyond the Euphrates and the gods worshiped by the other nations in Canaan, he placed the one, true God, and bade them choose whom they would serve, adding "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Quickly the people answered that they would serve the Lord, for He had done great things for them. Then Joshua, not to discourage them, but to make them realize the full meaning of

their solemn pledge, pictured to them the difficulties in God's service, for it must be "all in all or not at all," and severe punishment would befall them if they forsook Him and served other gods. "Nay, but we will serve the Lord," the people reaffirmed. After reminding them that they were their own witnesses of their pledge, he urged them to put away the strange gods among them and incline their hearts unto the Lord God of Israel. A third time the people pledged themselves to God's service. Then the covenant was solemnly renewed. Joshua wrote the words "in the book of the law of God," erected a great stone under an oak as a reminder of their solemn vow, and dismissed the people.

Not long afterwards Joshua, the faithful soldier, the wise judge, the upright statesman, and the deeply religious leader, died and was buried. "The servant of Moses" had earned the noble title of "The servant of Jehovah."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. I remember a sunset at sea when the bosom of each wavelet that fronted the west was aglow with fiery gold, and the back of each turned eastward was a cold green; so that looking on the one hand all was glory, and on the other all was sober melancholy. So different does life look to the young people and to us elder ones. *Alexander Maclaren.*

2. The Gospel of Service. Good men are not meant to be simply like trees planted by rivers of water, flourishing in their own pride and for their own sakes. They ought to be like the eucalyptus trees which have been set out in marshes of the Campagna, from which a healthful, tonic influence is said to be diffused to countervail the malaria. They ought to be like the tree of paradise, "whose leaves are for the healing of nations." *Henry van Dyke.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. What were the conditions under the oppression of the Midianites? (Judg. 6.1–6.) 2. Tell the story of Gideon's call to be a leader. (Judg. 6.11–40.) 3. What other name was given to Gideon, and why? (Judg. 7.1; 6.32.) 4. How were the three hundred chosen? (Judg. 7.1–8.) 5. In what previous lesson were people compared to grasshoppers? (Lesson IX, third quarter.) 6. For what was barley used? (See Kgs. 4.28 and John 6.9.) 7. How was the destruction of the Midianites recalled in Isa. 10.26 and Psa. 83.9? 8. What was the complaint of the Ephraimites, and how did Gideon reconcile them? (Judg. 8.1–3.) 9. What reward was offered Gideon for his services? (Judg. 8.22.) 10. What reward did he accept, and what was the result? (Judg. 8.23–27.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak successively act as judges, and each has a measure of success in overcoming enemies, but the oft recurring words in regard to the Israelites are that "They did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of" this or that nation. The suffering under the Midianites was severe, and Gideon was called to free the Israelites.

GIDEON AND HIS THREE HUNDRED

Judges 7.9–23. (Read Judges 6–8.) Commit vv. 17, 18.

Golden Text

Ye shall not fear them: for the Lord your God he shall fight for you. Deut. 3.22.

LESSON TEXT Judges 7.9–23

9 And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:

11 And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that *were* in the host.

12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude.

13 And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was *so,* when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword* of the Lord, and of Gideon.

19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran and cried, and fled.

22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.

23 And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

9. *Unto the host.* R. V., *unto the camp.* So also in verse 10 and elsewhere.

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GIDEON CHOOSING THE THREE HUNDRED—*Tissot*

I have delivered into thine hand. I have determined to do it, and it is as sure as if it were done. *Clarke.*

10. *But if thou fear to go down,* that is, with the whole band upon the full adventure, *go* first *thyself with Phurah thy servant,* and reconnoitre. *Smith.*

11. *The outside of.* R. V., *the outermost part of.* So also in verses 17 and 19.

12. A contrast vividly portrayed. *Lay along in the valley.* Referring to the disorder in which they were scattered about. *Lias. By the sea side.* R. V., *which is upon the sea-shore.*

13. *A man that told a dream.* R. V., *a man was telling a dream. Tumbled.* Rolled on its edge like a wheel. *Thatcher. A cake of barley bread.* To hear himself called but a barley cake, troubled him not. It matters not how base we be thought, so we be victorious. *Bishop Hall. Overturned it.* R. V., *turned it upside down.*

16. *He divided them into three companies.* No doubt they approached the enemy from three sides, and thus seemed to surround them. See verse 21. *Lamps.* R. V., *torches.*

18. *The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* R. V., *For the Lord and for Gideon.*

19. *They had but newly set the watch.* The guards who kept the middle watch went on duty at ten o'clock.

20. *To blow withal.* R. V., *wherewith to blow.*

21. *They stood every man in his place round about the camp.* The three companies did not move from their stations on three sides of the enemy. *They cried and fled.* R. V., *they shouted and put them to flight.*

22. The four places have not been definitely identified; the narrative shows that they were probably in the valley of Jezreel and Jordan. *Even throughout all the host.* R. V., *and against all the host.*

23. The Midianites fled southward, and the tribes bordering on the valley of Jezreel were hastily summoned to pursue them.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

11. *He went down with Phurah his servant.* Instead of the whole regiment rushing upon Midian in the strength of their faith, we see two men carefully picking their way from bush to bush in the darkness to where the camp fires of Midian glimmer across the plain. . . . Contrast Gideon under that first inspiration when God offered him victory for the rush at it, and Gideon now crawling from cover to cover, conscious that his life and the cause committed to him hung upon the breaking of a twig, the flicker of a flame: whether, it may be, that half asleep Ishmaelite on the outermost part of the camp will have energy enough to kick the bit of bush his feet are toying with into the fire and scatter its light five feet further into the darkness — for if he does, Gideon will be seen.

Now, that is a strange plunge from the ideal to the actual, and yet, I suppose,there never yet was a great leader, there was hardly ever a common soldier of God, who did not have to pass through the same train of experiences: when at one hour he felt the hand of God on him in the conviction of immediate victory, and the next was groping his uncertain way towards a preliminary understanding of the situation on which God had called him to act. *George Adam Smith,* in *Forgiveness of Sin.*

12. *The Midianites lay along the valley.* Gideon is represented as having led his people along the southern branch of the plain of Esdraelon; the Midianites and the Amalekites, and the children of the East are represented as occupying a portion of the northern branch, near the hill called Moreh, perhaps the Little Hermon or one of the slopes which overlook the valley. The Israelites had thus a full view of the great force against which they were moving, not more than two or three miles distant, and the prospect of the vast multitude caused many a hitherto stout heart to quail. *Lang.*

13. *Gideon.* A writer of our time has said of the story of Gideon that in force and beauty it is equal to any episode in the epic poems of Greece. Whatever homage we pay to it as literature, we can not deny its moral reality. . . . Amid those far off wonders we see the real man marching at the full height of his manhood: coming forth from God and effecting the work which was needed in his own day, in the spirit which is indispensable to God's service at all times. Gideon himself is real enough and strong enough to carry us past the difficulties of his story. May God quicken our sluggish lives to the pace, and lift them to the pitch of His! *George Adam Smith.*

13. *There was a man telling a dream.* Alike the dream and its interpretation are peculiarly eastern in character. Both would make the deepest impression on those sons of the desert, and, communicated to the next patrol, as the first watch was relieved by the second, must have prepared for that panic which, commencing with the advance guard, was so soon to speed through the whole camp of Midian. . . . In the tale of this dream the miracle of victory had already begun. *Alfred Edersheim.*

15. *He worshiped.* We perceive here that he was a man of faith and prayer —a man who walked with God,—a man whose thoughts, even amidst the engrossing cares of that momentous hour, were towards his Maker,—a man who held communion with his God amidst the perils of a nocturnal sally and the stratagems of war. Having worshiped, with light and nimble steps he climbed the mountain side, and roused his little band with the words full of hearty cheer —"Arise: for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian." *Luke H. Wiseman.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

13. *A cake of barley bread.* Barley is the universal food in Palestine of horses, and asses, and sometimes also draught oxen. Straw is chopped for hay, and the corn winnowed and given separately. Oats is unknown, being a grain confined to much colder climates. But barley is also largely consumed as an article of human food. At least half the bread eaten by the poor is of barley (see 2 Chron. 2.10) where equal parts of wheat and barley are allotted to the artificers at the temple. But it is considered a proof of poverty and hardship to be compelled to live on barley bread, which, as all those who have eaten it for any time know, is much inferior in nutritive qualities to wheaten. . . . Gideon's family were poor in Manasseh, and he the least in his father's house. The Midianite invader, like any proud Bedouin to-day, would call the despised Israelitish fellah who tilled the soil "a barley cake." *H. B. Tristam* in *Natural History of the Bible.*

16. *Torches within the pitchers.* There is a kind of torch used by the police of Cairo, called a "shealeh," which may throw some light upon the means em-

ployed by Gideon and his three hundred men to terrify the Midianites and overthrow them. It burns without a flame, except when waved through the air, which causes it at once to burst into a blaze. Its burning end is carried in a small earthen jar, or "pitcher," and it thus answers the purpose of a dark lantern; but experienced thieves are set upon their guard by the small light which it emits. *Van Lennep,* in *Bible Lands.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The valley of Jezreel, paragraphs 114, 115; tribes, paragraphs 129, 130; history, paragraphs 126–128.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. On the eve of the Civil War in England, Oliver Cromwell was made captain of a troop, and he wanted a company of men whom he could depend upon. Great numbers came to enlist, but Cromwell was very particular about the ones he selected. He would not take them because they were of noble birth, nor because they were experienced fighters; he must have, he said "men who had the fear of God before them. I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain, that knows what he is fighting for, and loves what he knows, than what you call a 'gentleman,' and is nothing else." Gradually he sifted out his men till he had a regiment of one thousand. "A few honest men are better than numbers," he said. Cromwell's Ironsides, as the regiment was called, became famous, and "they never were beaten." They fought for English liberty, singing Psalms as they advanced into battle. Had Cromwell done nothing else but raise and discipline that magnificent regiment he would deserve lasting fame, says the historian.

In the years that followed the death of Joshua, Israel was troubled by the nations around them, and a brave man named Gideon wanted a company to defeat them. Like Cromwell, it was not numbers, but men that could be depended upon, that he wanted. Tell the story of the way in which his three hundred men were chosen. (Judges, 7.1–8.)

For Older Pupils. Not till the time of Samuel's sons do we find the so-called "Judges" exercising the judicial functions which we associate with this term. After the death of Joshua there was "no King in Israel," no succession of prophets; it was a rough and lawless age; "every man did that which was right in his own eyes; "from time to time deliverers called judges, who were more than mere heads of tribes, were raised up to free the land from invaders. There are long blanks in the history. We see Israel steadily declining nationally and spiritually, fighting against one another and worshiping heathen gods. In Othniel and Deborah we recognize spiritual leaders; in Samson, a man who has no conception of what is required of him. Between these two extremes stands Gideon, both a man of faith and a man of action, not having the deeper spiritual insight of the former nor yet the mad prowess of the latter.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I God-directed Victory

The Lord hath delivered into Your Hand the Host. "Remember the

Lord and fight," said Nehemiah when Sanballat and others conspired to hinder the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Throughout their history the Israelites were taught that God directed them and gave them their victories. "Fear not the people of the land; for the Lord is with us," said Moses. "The Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian," called Gideon. "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts," cried David. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" exclaimed Paul.

At the beginning of the Alpine climbing season the Swiss guides attend service at the foot of the mountain, and the priest "blesses the ropes."

"So let it be. In God's own might
We gird us for the coming fight,"

sings Whittier. Among the lists of duties written by Lord Balfour in his diary are found these and similar words; "Prayer for state of mind that God can use me to speak in council on the second of June." "Prayer for wisdom and strength to testify in the Council against electing publicans to be aldermen."

England's Ally. Once a sturdy Scot, valiant in speech as in deed, English Ambassador to the Court of Prussia, sat at the table of Frederick the Great, then meditating a war whose sinews were to be mainly formed of English subsidies. Round the table sat French wits of the infidel sort, and they and the King made merry over decadent superstitions, the follies of the ancient faith. Suddenly the talk changed to war and war's alarms. Said the long-silent Scot, "England would, by the help of God, stand by Prussia." "Ah!" said infidel Frederick, "I did not know you had an Ally of that name;" and the infidel wits smirked applause. "So please your Majesty," was the swift retort, "He is the only Ally to whom we do not send subsidies." There stood the truth confessed. England's best ally is God; the times of her truest heroism and magnanimity have been the times when she was most obedient to Him. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

The World is not Governed by Chance. Where the piles of a new bridge were to be driven in a river-bed there was an old sunken water main. All efforts to remove it proved futile. Huge cables were wrapped around the main and then harnessed to a locomotive, only to result in derailing the engine. They were attached to tug-boats, and they held the boats fast. It was evident the bridge must be built elsewhere. Then came one who claimed he could remove the main; he was told to try. He lashed two old mud-scows together, fastened the cables firmly to them, and waited. The scows tossed and strained till there was a mighty upheaval in the river-bed, for the incoming tide had conquered. It was not "luck" nor "chance" that raised that water main. This world is not governed by chance.

Doctor Hillis draws this lesson from the modern loom. "The shuttles fly back and forth in their grooves, light threads give place to dark ones, literally millions of fibers are woven into each bolt of silk,—yet each thread has its place in the flowered design, and all threads conspire towards unity and beauty; but back of each loom stands the inventor making grooves and shuttles to be his natural laws, and through the forces of steel and iron and gravity, weaving millions of threads into the richly embroidered robes. And behind all the laws and forces of nature stands God, the divine Designer, working now in dark colors, and now in colors of glowing light; what design He is working out, only those who stand behind the veil can know."

God Controls History. God is the Controller of History. Before Na-

poleon Bonaparte invaded Russia he told the Russian ambassador that he would destroy that empire. The Ambassador's reply was, "Man proposes, but God disposes." "Tell your master," thundered the arrogant and self-confident Corsican, "that I am he that proposes and I am he that disposes." It was a challenge to the living God to show who is the ruler of this world; and God accepted the challenge. He moved not from His august throne. But He sent one of His most humble messengers, the crystal snow-flake from heaven, to punish the audacious boaster! Napoleon flung his forces into Moscow, but in his retreat, he left on the frozen plains the bulk of his vast army; and the official returns of the Russian authorities reported 213,516 French corpses buried and 95,816 dead horses. When in 1815, Napoleon, escaping from Elba, again threatened to dispose events in European history at his will, the Sovereign of this world, whose hand is on the helm of history, ordained that Blucher should join the Iron Duke at the turning-point of the conflict of Waterloo, and that the decisive battle should turn the fate of Europe. That was the crowning victory that ushered in thirty years of peace. Napoleon found, at St. Helena, that God dispose. *Arthur T. Pierson,* in *Modern Mission Century.*

II Contempt of Others

A Cake of Barley Bread. When the spies brought back their report to Canaan, they told about the Anakim and said that in the sight of these giants, as they called them, they themselves were as grasshoppers. Perhaps it was their own cowardice which made them attribute this scornful thought to the Anakim, but if the latter really thought of the Israelites thus contemptuously, they found out their mistake when later the Israelites attacked them. The dreamer in the camp of the Midianites saw Gideon as a cake of barley bread, the poorest and meanest of enemies, but his comrade truly told him that into Gideon's hand God had delivered Midian.

Modern Pharisees. "You must not expect to treat me in the same rough manner that you treat the miserable wretches at your hospital," said a prime minister of France to a surgeon who came to perform a serious operation upon him. "My Lord," replied the great surgeon, "every one of those miserable wretches, as your eminence is pleased to call them, is a prime minister in my eyes, for each is one of God's poor."

"There is no great and no small
To the great Soul that maketh all."

"I am holier than thou," said the Pharisee, in his day, and there are Pharisees like him in our day. Secretary Bonaparte does not believe in this spirit, and all good Americans rejoiced when he dismissed a clerk from the Norfolk Navy Yard because, after agreeing to lease a room in his house to a sailor serving with the torpedo flotilla, the clerk refused to carry out his agreement on the ground that he would lose his social standing in his neighborhood if a man in the uniform of a sailor were seen going and coming from the house.

"No drudge in his corner but speeds the world's wheels;
No serf in the field but is sowing God's seed —
More noble, I think, in the dust though he kneels,
Than the pauper of wealth, who makes scorn of the deed."

Prejudice a Reason for Contempt. The Chinaman's odd jacket and shoes, his pigtail and almond-shaped eyes — even the food he eats — make our mob

treat him with contempt. The Chinese at home, however, are a very remarkable people: they invented gunpowder and the art of printing without any help from Europe; they have their fine temples and statues; their leading merchants and statesmen compare with any in the world; no people is more industrious.

We think that white is a better color than black, yellow, or brown. Mr. Darwin, when among the South Sea Islanders, noticed that a white man bathing by the side of a Tahitian was like celery bleached by the gardener, compared with a fine dark-green plant growing in the open fields, and he said it required little habit to make a dark skin more pleasing and natural to the eyes of a European than his own color.

Sometimes the rich feel themselves superior to the poor. One of the "poor whites" in Kentucky, who could not write, married in 1806 a woman of the same class who could read and write a little. They could not hold on to the land which they tried to farm, and at last they resolved to cross the Ohio River and settle in one of the new Northern States. They took with them their little boy, born in 1809. Nobody missed them when they went. Nobody, judging this boy by his looks and his circumstances, could have seen any promise of greatness in him, could have foreseen in him a future president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln. *Wendell P. Garrison,* in *Parables for School.*

Contempt of Ordinary People. You remember how in Browning's *Christmas Eve* the supercilious visitor found that God had been among the poor chapel folk, and how God was leaving him because he had despised them.

"No face, only the sight
Of a sweeping garment, vast and white,
With a hem, I could recognize."

To have the hem of Christ's "sweeping garment" touch us, and then to fling it aside with contempt, because it comes in the shape of ordinary people, is not only one of the master sins, but also one of the irreparable losses of life. *Ian Maclaren.*

A Fable.

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "Little Prig";
Ben replied:
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut." *R. W. Emerson.*

III The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon

Co-laborers with God. One of the heroes of the Revolutionary War demanded the surrender of a fortress "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!" Does he not seem to have been thinking of "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon?" Does not every true Christian feel that he is not working alone, but is a co-laborer with God? It has been rightly said that we should pray as if all depended on God, and should work as if all depended on ourselves.

"What our hand findeth, do with might;
Ask less for help, but stand or fall,
Each one of us, in life's great fight,
As if himself and God were all."

These are words of Alice Cary's which we might well take to heart.

God and You. From a nursery one brings a little switch a few inches long. What is that? An oak. That an oak? Well, yes, it is the beginning of an oak. Leave it lying there on the table and presently it would dry and be good only for the fire; but plant it in the ground and it will grow to the stature of an oak. Take this man up and root him in God and no man can tell to what he will grow. That is the message. "I can not?" You and God can; there is nothing that you and God can not do together. When He enters your life, points out to you your duty, calls you to your mission, lays on you your burden, crowns you with suffering, He stands at your side and says to you, Together, you and I can. "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." *Lyman Abbott.*

The Plan is God's. Go to the man who is carrying a stone for a building; ask him where that stone is going, to what part of the temple, and how he is going to get it into place, and what does he do? He points you to the builder's plans. This is only one stone of many. So, when men shall ask where and how your little achievement is going into God's plans, point them to your Master who keeps the plans, and then go on doing your little service as faithfully as if the whole temple were yours to build. *Phillips Brooks.*

"I did not write that book; it was written through me. I was only the instrument through which it was given to the world," said Harriet Beecher Stowe of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* "Where do you find all the incidents from which you write your poems," some one asked James Whitcomb Riley, and the poet replied, "God sends them to me and tells me how to use them. My only anxiety is lest I get too much Riley in them."

SENTENCE SERMONS

In my own hands my want and weakness are,
My strength, O God, is Thine. *Bayard Taylor.*

There are two bars of judgment; the one, public opinion, and the other, the bar of God. *J. S. McIntosh.*

A man is known by what he laughs at. *Carlyle.*

I will go forth among men not mailed in scorn,
But in the armour of a pure intent. *Alexander Smith.*

Some day you will launch your ship, my boy, on Life's wide, treacherous sea—
Be sure your rudder is wrought of strength to stand the stress of the gale,

And your hand on the wheel, don't let it flinch, whatever the tumult be,
For the will of man, with the help of God, shall conquer and prevail.
Celia Thaxter in *St. Nicholas.*

There is but one way in which man can ever help God — that is by letting God help him. *Ruskin.*

Only when thine arm
In sense of weakness reaches forth to God,
Wilt thou be strong to suffer and to do. *Plumptre.*

To character and success, two things, contradictory as they may seem, must go together — humble dependence and manly independence; humble dependence on God and manly reliance on self. *Wordsworth.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Ye are laborers together with God. 1 Cor. 3.9.
There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few. 1 Sam. 14, 6.
In the name of our God we will set up our banners. Psa. 20.5.
It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. Psa. 118.8.
Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Zech. 4.6.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

While there is much in Gideon's rude life that we can not approve, it has yet for us several forceful lessons. He lived up to the light he had; do we? His faith in God was supreme; is ours? He pressed on "faint yet pursuing"; is our zeal lasting? He gave to God the glory; do we realize God's guiding care? Let us derive an inspiration from Gideon's life, and make our lives more trustful, faithful and zealous.

THE LESSON STORY

Those were turbulent times in which Gideon, our hero, lived. Year after year, the Midianites were wont to cross the Jordan with their tents and their cattle at the time of harvest and overrun the country, and the Israelites would flee to the hills and leave them in possession of their crops. To Gideon came the call of God to rouse to action. "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Gideon realized that such trouble was theirs, not because God had failed them, but because they had turned from His worship to that of Baal. One night he destroyed the altar of Baal and built an altar to God and sacrificed thereon. The next morning great was the amazement and fury of the people. They sought Gideon to kill him, but his shrewd father said, "Will ye contend for Baal? If he be a god let him contend for himself." The people therefore called Gideon Jerubbaal, Let Baal contend. Gideon still lived despite the wrath of Baal, and they believed that he was called of God.

Presently the Midianites came, one hundred and thirty-five thousand strong, and encamped in the valley of Jezreel near the hill of Moreh. Gideon had gathered an army of thirty-two thousand, and pitched his camp on a height overlooking the valley. No doubt Gideon was proud of his army, though far outnumbered by the enemy, yet the word of the Lord came to him that, being

so many they might say "Mine own hand hath saved me." They were fighting under God's banner, and to Him must be ascribed the victory. Gideon had those leave who were afraid, and ten thousand men remained. Still there were too many, and Gideon brought them to the river to test them. Three hundred stood the test, proving their zeal for battle by hastily snatching water in the hollow of their hands to quench their thirst, while all the others kneeled to drink at their leisure. Jewish tradition ascribes another reason for the choice of the three hundred; the followers of Baal were wont to kneel in their idolatrous worship, and those who knelt at the river thus betrayed themselves.

Instead of making an attack at once, Gideon went with his servant to the Midianite camp to reconnoiter. Stealthily they approached. There were no sentries on duty; had they not come like this for seven successive years, and had not the Israelites always fled before them? They did not fear the Israelites, they only despised them. Two men were awake, and one was telling a dream. He had seen a round barley cake roll against his tent and overthrow it. It is Gideon, his comrade told him, Gideon aided by God. Then they knew about him and the power of the God of the Israelites, Gideon learned, and encouraged, he hastened back to his company. Each man was given a trumpet and a lighted torch concealed within a pitcher. In three companies of a hundred men each they advanced upon the mighty Midianite host from three sides. Suddenly, at the command of Gideon, they broke their pitchers and waved their torches, blew their trumpets, and gave their wild war cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

The dazed Midianites thought themselves surrounded; they were panic-stricken and knowing not friend from foe, they turned against one another. Those who survived took refuge in flight, and Gideon pursued them. He called on the Ephraimites to help exterminate the enemy, and complete was their victory. So great was the rejoicing that the Israelites sought to make Gideon their ruler, but he refused, for, said he, "The Lord shall rule over you."

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The characteristics of the era of the Judges.

2. The condition of Israel was Gideon's opportunity. There are always in a healthy nation heroes lying in wait for opportunity. They do not always find it, and I think that one of the most pathetic things in the world's history is that so often men of magnificent, heroic character have lived in times when they had no chance to show it. It is a crisis that brings out what men and women really are. *W. G. Elmslie.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Review the thirteenth lesson of the second quarter. 2. Who wrote the book of Romans? (Paul.) 3. What is the general subject of the fourteenth chapter? 4. Read the eighth chapter of First Corinthians. 5. What did Jesus say in Matt 18.6 about causing offense to others? 6. Had Paul acted in accordance with his conscience when persecuting the Christians? (Acts 26.9.) 7. How was Peter taught not to dispise the Gentiles? (Acts 10.) 8. Is the conscience always right in its decisions? 9. Is it ever right to act contrary to the dictates of conscience?

LESSON VIII — NOVEMBER 24

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY

Romans 14.12–23. Commit vv. 19–21.

Golden Text

Judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Rom. 14.13.

LESSON TEXT Romans 14.12–23.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.
14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.
15 But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.
16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
18 For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.
19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.
21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.
22 Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.
23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

12. *So then.* Verses 4 and 10 have spoken of man's judging man; when man realizes his own accountability to God, as stated in verse 12, he will see how unfit he is to judge another.

13. *Judge this rather.* Make no decision about your brother's character, but make this decision about your own future conduct. *Beet.*

14. *I know.* Paul himself has no scruples about eating anything forbidden the Jews by the Levitical law. *By the Lord Jesus.* R. V., *in the Lord Jesus.* See John 2.24. The persuasion is not the result of his own reasoning, but of his fellowship in the Lord Jesus. *Vincent. Unclean.* The Old Testament law forbade the eating of certain animals (See Lev. 11), which were therefore called κοινὸν common, unclean, as opposed to what was appointed them to eat, and was therefore pure or holy. *But to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean.* R. V., *save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean.* One must not disregard his conscience.

15. *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably.* R. V., *for if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Grieved.* It is a hurt to his conscience. *Vincent. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* Do not think more of your food than Christ thought of His life. *Bengel.*

16. *Let not your good be evil spoken of.* If you exercise your good, your Christian liberty, your right to eat anything, and thereby offend another whose conscience will not allow him to eat it, then others will speak evil of your liberty. It is too great a price to pay for a matter of so little importance.

17. This verse shows what is unimportant and what is important.

18. *For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God.* R. V., *for he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God.*

19. We must consider what effect our conduct will have on others.

20. *For meat destroy not the work of God.* R. V., *overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. The work of God.* The Christian brother, whose Christian personality is God's work. *Vincent. Pure.* R. V., *clean. All things. . . . but;* the same assertion of a general truth followed by an exception as in verse 14.

21. *Nor anything.* R. V., *nor do anything. Or is offended, or is made weak.* Omitted in the R. V.

22. *Hast thou faith?* R. V., *the faith which thou hast.* The enlightened faith, which permits thee to see that all things are clean. *Have it to thyself.* Do not proclaim it so as to offend others. *Condemneth.* R. V., *judgeth. Alloweth.* R. V., *approveth.*

23. *Damned.* R. V., *condemned. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* Whatever is not done because we believe it to be right, springs from self, and is, therefore, sin. *Beet.*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

13. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more.* Nothing grows upon me so much with lengthening life as the sense of the difficulties, or rather the impossibilities, with which we are beset whenever we are tempted to take to ourselves the functions of the Eternal Judge (except in reference to ourselves, where judgment is committed to us). The shades of the rainbow are not so nice, and the sands of the seashore are not such a multitude, as are the subtle, shifting, blending forms of thought and of circumstance that go to determine the character of us and of our acts. But there is One that seeth plainly and judgeth righteously. *William E. Gladstone.*

14. *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus.* How grandly Paul swung himself into independence of character, cutting loose from the tradition of his fathers, from the leading strings of his home education; from his university culture, at the feet of Gamaliel; and, harder still to accomplish, from his own past, breaking with that sense of consistency which even strong men drag behind them, as a ship might drag a fastened rudder! Paul yielded his judgment and life to Jesus, but not until the light from that divine face shot its persuasion through his mind, and then he followed Jesus, still in absolute independence because the Master's mind had become his own. My Christian conscience is literally *con-scio,* — what I know within myself; for "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." *James M. Ludlow.*

14. *There is nothing unclean of itself.* I know — Paul instances his own experience and principle — that nothing, nothing of the sort in question, no food, no time, is "unclean" of itself; literally, "by means of itself," by any inherent mischief; only to the man who counts anything "unclean," to him it is unclean. And therefore you, because you are not his conscience, must not tamper with his conscience. It is, in this case, mistaken; yes, but what it wants is not your compulsion, but the Lord's light. If you can do so, bring that light to bear, but dare not, for Christ's sake, compel a conscience. For conscience means the man's best actual sight of the law of right and wrong. It may be a dim and distorted sight; but it is his best at this moment. He can not violate it without sin, nor can you bid him do so without yourself sinning. Conscience may not always see right. But to transgress conscience is always wrong. *H. C. Moule.*

16. *Let not your good be evil spoken of.*

Better to use the bit, than throw
The reins all loose on fancy's neck.
The liberal range of Art should be
The breadth of Christian liberty,
Restrained alone by challenge and alarm
Where its charmed footsteps tread the border land of harm.

Whittier.

21. *Whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.* The moral derelict is a serious menace to society. Many a fine ship on the ocean has gone down because it struck, perhaps of a dark night, a chill iceberg, or a half-sunken schooner or brig. The moral derelict, whether his nature be that of the cold, glittering Pharisaic hypocrite, or the besotted, sin-smeared profligate, gets in the way of the progress of society, and becomes an occasion of stumbling and perhaps of utter disaster to many a better nature that collides against him. It is coming gradually to be understood that the world's East Ends condition its West Ends, that the slums make or mar the Back Bays, that fever in the tenement, whether typhoid or spiritual contagion, lays the hand of death upon the petted darling of Fortune, seemingly secure in a selfish seclusion of gay, godless, unsympathetic life. It is an old law, in its operation fresh as yesterday's murder or last night's fire, that if one member of society suffer, all the members suffer with it. The depraved individual tends to make society depraved; the loosened brick in the moral bulwarks of the community tends to bring the whole rampart down in ruin. When society grows wiser it will understand these things, and taking just the opposite course from the government vessel which goes out to destroy the derelicts on the seas of Time, will reach out to save the wanderers, both for their own sake and for the salvation of the State, and most of all for Jesus Christ's sake, who came from Heaven that the lost might be found and the wanderers won back to God. *Zion's Herald.*

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. Professor Dager says that a big dog once taught him a forcible lesson. He and a friend took a long walk one day through the country, and this dog easily jumped from bank to bank of a deep gully they passed. But when they took the same walk a few days later the dog would not attempt to get across in this way; instead, he ran off a quarter of a mile

to a path that led down and up, and he did this both in going and returning. What was the reason? There was a little dog with him this time, and the big dog knew that if he jumped across the little dog would try it and would fall in. This is just the lesson which the Apostle Paul was teaching the people at Rome in the words of our text to-day.

For Older Pupils. Paul's subject in the fourteenth chapter of Romans is the same as he had in mind when writing the tenth chapter of First Corinthians, which formed the text of our Temperance Lesson of the second quarter. In both alike he is considering the duty of a Christian in regard to things indifferent, things having no moral value in themselves. He is counseling "the strong" Christian to limit his undoubted liberty because of the conscience of "the weak" Christian. The "strong" Christian, in Paul's thought, seems to be the one whose conscience is untroubled by any scruples about the necessity of following customs which had been handed down from the days before Christ, while the "weak" Christian is the one who has not yet grasped the thought that Christ has emancipated him from the old customs which were meant to be but temporary.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I It is Good neither to eat Flesh nor to drink Wine, whereby thy Brother stumbleth

The Guilt One may incur by His Liberty. I may feel at perfect liberty to drink wine. Had I only myself to consider, and knowing that my temptation does not lie that way, I might use wine regularly or as often as I felt disposed to enjoy a needed stimulant. I may feel quite convinced in my own mind that morally I am not one whit the worse for doing so. But I can not determine whether I am to indulge myself or not without considering the effect my conduct will have on others. There may be among my friends some who know that their temptation does lie that way, and whose conscience bids them altogether refrain. If by my example such persons are encouraged to silence the voice of their own conscience, then I incur the incalculable guilt of helping to destroy a brother for whom Christ died. *Marcus Dods.*

In his earlier years Rudyard Kipling was wont to say, "There is no harm in liquor, taken moderately." Then one night he saw two young girls made drunk by two men in a concert hall, and he wrote this confession: "My own demand for beer helped to send those two girls reeling down the dark street. It is not good that we should let it lie before the eyes of children, and I have been a fool in writing to the contrary. Better it is that a man would go without his beer in public places than to bring temptation to the lips of young fools such as the four I had seen."

The Influence of Example. "But," says one, "what good can I do by signing the pledge? I never drink, even without signing." The question has already been asked and answered more than a million times. Let it be answered once more. For the man suddenly or in any other way to break off from the use of drams, who has indulged in them for a long course of years, and until his appetite for them has grown ten or a hundredfold stronger, and more craving than any natural appetite can be, requires a most powerful

moral effort. In such an undertaking he needs every moral support and influence that can possibly be brought to his aid and thrown around him. And not only so, but every moral prop should be taken from whatever argument might rise in his mind to lure him to his backsliding.

But it is said by some that men will think and act for themselves; that none will disuse spirits or anything else because his neighbors do; and that moral influence is not that powerful engine contended for. Let us examine this. Let me ask the man who could maintain this position most stiffly, what compensation he will accept to go to church some Sunday and sit during the sermon with his wife's bonnet upon his head? Not a trifle, I'll venture, and why not? There would be nothing irreligious in it, nothing immoral, nothing uncomfortable; then why not? Is it not because there would be something egregiously unfashionable in it? Then it is the influence of fashion; and what is the influence of fashion but the influence that other people's actions have on our actions — the strong inclination each of us feels to do as we see all our neighbors do? Nor is the influence of fashion confined to any particular thing or class of things; it is just as strong on one subject as another. Let us make it as unfashionable to withhold our names from the temperance cause as for husbands to wear their wives' bonnets to church, and instances will be just as rare in the one case as the other. *Abraham Lincoln.*

Wherein Safety lies. Do you say, "I am not obliged to sign away my liberty in order to keep on the safe side? True, you are not obliged; but here is a river which we have to cross. It is broad, and deep, and rapid; whoever falls into it is sure to be drowned. Here is a narrow foot-bridge, a single timber extending across. He who is lithe of limb, and steady of brain and nerve may skip over it in safety. Yonder is a broad strong bridge. All may cross it in perfect safety,— the aged and feeble, the young and the tottering wee ones,— there is no danger there. Now, you say, "Let them go yonder who can not walk this timber." True, true, you are not obliged; but we know that if we cross that timber, though we may go safely, many others who will attempt to follow us will surely perish, and we feel better to go by the bridge! *William Arnot.*

A Pledge signed for Another's Sake. The *Liverpool Daily Post* gives an interesting account of the signing of the pledge by Tawhiao, King of the New Zealand Maoris: "Tawhiao was anything but an abstainer, and his evil doings were a source of perpetual anxiety. Londoners will still remember his visit to England nearly twenty years ago, when he was, as far as a Maori monarch could be, one of the lions of the season. It was at the outset of his journey that he called upon Sir George Gray. Sir George Gray boldly raised the question which was troubling Tawhiao's friends. What, he asked Tawhiao, would he think of a man who brought about the death of a fellow-being, or of many fellow-beings, or who destroyed the happiness of a whole nation? 'Who could be so cruel. It is not possible that anybody could be so wicked,' said the King, and as he realized the meaning of the question he sobbed like a child, and asked Sir George pitifully what could be done lest he should disgrace the Maori people while in England. 'I'll tell you,' said Sir George. 'We'll both sign a pledge, agreeing to abstain from alcohol in any form. That pledge will mutually bind us for a number of years, and there could be no more sacred contract.'"

II Judging Others

Why we should not judge Others. One reason that we should not judge, or condemn, others is because we do not know others. According to Oliver Wendell Holmes every one has a threefold individuality. First, he says, there is the real John, known only to his Maker. Second, there is John's ideal John, never the real one and often unlike him. Third, there is Thomas's ideal John, never the real John nor John's John, but very unlike either. Thomas does not know that the real John is as worthy of condemnation as his ideal John seems to him to be; the real John is in truth known only to his Maker.

"Judge not the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield."

Another reason for not judging others is given in the twelfth verse of our lesson. "So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God." We are self-righteous Pharisees if we think we have a right to condemn others. Jesus ranked those lost in sin nearer the Kingdom of God than some judging, self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees. "Judgment is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

"There's no place where earthly failings
Have such kindly judgments given,"

sang Faber of Heaven, for he knew that while earth sees only the failings, Heaven sees the struggles as well.

A Cruel Judgment. Baptist Sloan had for years been pointed out as the black sheep of the flock of the Upper Beargrass Church, a man little better than an infidel. As he sat on his porch in the dark he heard the shrill voice of Mrs. Jane Bowles as she was driving by with the visiting minister. "We're coming to Baptist Sloan's house now, Brother Hubbs," she called in high staccato. "I want you should rub it in to him good to-night in your sermon. He's a regular wolf in sheep's clothing, if there ever was one. Twice on a Sunday for fifty-two weeks in the year, he's sitting in that third pew from the front, as pious as any pillar in the congregation. You can count up for yourself how many sermons he must have heard, for he's fifty if he's a day. But in spite of all that anybody can say or do, he won't be immersed and join. That outward show of goodness only makes his excuse worse for the young folks. I never can look at him without saying to myself, 'But inwardly ye are raving wolves.'"

"O Lord," groaned Baptist Sloan presently, "you know I'm not a wolf in sheep's clothing. More like I'm a sheep in a wolf's. Nobody understands it. I want to tell, and yet it seems like I hadn't ought to yet awhile. It will take twenty dollars more, and I can't depend on any ready cash until after wheat harvest."

Then he caught the words of that song floating out from the church,

"John went down to the river Jordan,
To wash his sins away!"

Little did the congregation think that with the thread of that old tune lay the

unravelling of Baptist Sloan's riddle. For this is the scene it brought to him out of one of the earliest years of his childhood. There was a white face lying back among the pillows of a great bed. Somebody had lifted a big family Bible and laid it open on the edge of the bed, and he saw himself, a sober-faced little fellow in brown dress and apron, standing on tiptoe to look at the pictures. That white face on the pillows was his mother's, and this was the only recollection he had of her. Pointing to a queer old engraving, she had told him the story of John the Baptist, adding with her thin hand on his curls: "And your name is John, too. Little John Baptist, though we don't call you by all of it. I named you that a purpose. Give you a good name, so you'd be a good man. Mebbe it's just a whim of mine, but I've thought a good deal about it while I've been lying here sick. Mebbe some day you'll be able to go to the Holy Land, 'way over the mountains and over the seas and be baptized in that same river Jordan where the dove descended."

Even though the baby brain understood but dimly what she said to him, the light in her uplifted eyes filled him with solemn awe, and from that moment the mantle of her ambition rested henceforth on his young shoulders. And through all the years since he had kept his own counsel, hoarding every penny he could save, to the refrain of his mother's remembered words: "Over the mountains and over the seas, and be baptized in that same river Jordan." Adapted from *Baptist Sloan's Pisgah,* by *Annie Fellows Johnston* in *The Century.*

III To him that esteemeth Anything to be Unclean to him it is Unclean

Conscience. The moral sense, or conscience, is as much a part of a man as his leg or arm. It is given to all human beings in a stronger or weaker degree, as force of members is given them in a greater or less degree. It may be strengthened by exercise as may any particular limb of the body. This sense is submitted, indeed, in some degree to the guidance of reason, but it is a small stock which is required for this. State a moral case to a ploughman and a professor. The former will decide it as well, and often better than the latter, because he has not been led astray by artificial rules. Conscience is the only clue that will eternally guide a man clear of all doubts and inconsistencies. *Thomas Jefferson.*

To disobey Conscience is always Wrong. It is contrary to the very essence of Paul's teaching to suppose that one can draw lines, and imagine that everything on one side of the line is right and everything on the other is wrong. There are no such lines. Life is all to be given to God; whatever helps the divine life is right; whatever hinders is wrong. But if a man does in fact, however mistakingly, draw such a line, then for him to transgress is wrong, because to transgress it is to hinder his own divine life, violate his conscience, and so obscure his moral judgment and weaken his moral will. *Lyman Abbott.*

The task of learning what the right is is left to the intelligence, but the duty to obey the right and to follow the truth is invariable. Conscience gives no peace until men walk in the way of righteousness; for every man that way at any given time is the way which, in the use of all the light that he can get, he believes to be the right.

All decisions should be based on moral principle. A man should not ask what

another person thinks he ought to do, but rather should stand fast by what, from looking within, he has discerned for himself to be right. Each man should be loyal to his own convictions. For him they are the will of God. They can be neglected, or violated, only at the risk of moral atrophy and spiritual ruin. *Amory H. Bradford.*

Other People's Conscience. Conscience becomes degenerate and ceases to be an incentive by having substituted for it some standard of duty other than one's own persuasion. It is bad enough to have another man or set of men outside of you control your actions. That is slavery. It is worse to have another man or set of men control you from the inside: to think thoughts as others may dictate, without the exercise of rational judgment on your part. That is worse than slavery; it is the destruction of manhood. The only free man is he who forms his own principles, and then voluntarily conforms himself to them. He mines their substance, indeed, in the rich field of God's righteousness, but the veins gleam in his own moral sense. If he has learned these principles from others in early education, it is only as a newcomer learns the location of a lode from former prospectors. He insists on assaying his moral metal himself by meditation, or else demands that the "sterling mark" of Heaven be indubitable.

Epictetus was the slave of Epaphroditus, and Epaphroditus was the slave of Nero: but Epictetus was really freer than the Emperor whose servant he served. Hear him. "Master says, 'I will fetter you.' I reply, 'What do you say, man? Fetter me? You will fetter my leg, but not Zeus himself can get the better of my free will.'" So the slave of a slave became the philosopher of liberty, just as Paul became the apostle of liberty when he gave us that ringing command, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." *James M. Ludlow,* in *Incentives for Life.*

Our Conscience should be Regulated. Conscience is like a watch,—it may look right, and you may go by it on the assumption that it is right, and find that you have missed your train because it was all wrong, after all. The watch must be set by the sure time, and regulated from time to time as comparison with the chronometer shows it needs. *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The great beacon light God sets in all,
The conscience of each bosom. *Browning.*

Sweep the snow from thine own door; spy not the frost on another's tiles. *Chinese Saying.*

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. *Shakespeare.*

The greatest fault, I should say, is to be conscious of none but other people's. *Carlyle.*

The mind that becomes critical is small without realizing its littleness. *H. W. Mabie.*

My liberty ends when it begins to involve the possibility of ruin to my neighbor. *John Stewart Mill.*

Whereof you reprove another be unblamable yourself. *George Washington*

Freedom means that the will should be governed by the conscience; and it means that the conscience should be governed by God. *Alexander Maclaren.*

If you see a fault in others, think of two of your own, and do not add a third one by your hasty judgment. *Flamner.*

To look ever towards the noblest ideal for oneself, yet to forgive the failure to live up to it in every other — this is indispensable to right living. *Edward Howard Griggs.*

It is infinitely better to think wrong and to act right upon that wrong thinking, than it is to think right and not to do as that thinking requires of us. *George Macdonald.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. I Tim. 4.4.

It were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. I Cor. 9.15.

Let all things be done unto edifying. 1 Cor. 14.26.

Peter said, not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. Acts. 10.14, 15.

Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 1 Cor. 8.1.

When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. 1 Cor. 8.12, 13.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Matt, 7.1, 2.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

How much we expect of others, and how little of ourselves! How hard to find excuse for the evil that others do, how easy for our own sins! We need to learn the lesson of charity for others and of condemnation for ourselves. Judgment belongs to God. Let us not forget that our part is to help, not hinder.

THE LESSON STORY

The apostle Paul is writing to the church at Rome. One man believes, he tells them, that he may eat all things, while another, whose faith still clings to the old Mosaic law that some animals are not to be eaten, eats only herbs. He that eats all things should not despise him that eats not, and he that eats not should not judge him that eats. Who art thou that judges? Paul asks. Every one is accountable to God alone, to whom judgment belongs. Therefore let us not judge one another. Let us rather see to it that we do not become a stumbling-block to others. In my own mind, Paul tells them, I am certain, because of the knowledge gained through my fellowship with Christ, that there is nothing in itself unclean, that is, nothing which it is unlawful to eat, but if any one thinks anything is unclean, then to him it is unclean, he must not eat it in violation of his conscience. If your brother's conscience is hurt by your eating then you are not acting in the spirit of Christian love; you are harming him for whom Christ died. Your liberty of conscience is a

good thing, but you pay too dear a price for it when you exercise it and thus cause others to speak evil of it. The Kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking; it consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, and he that serves Christ by promoting these things is well pleasing to God and to man. Therefore let us strive for peace and for the spiritual upbuilding of one another. For the sake of eating do not destroy your brother who is precious because the work of God. All things indeed you may lawfully eat, but it is evil in you, nevertheless, to eat them if thereby you offend another. It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything which causes a weaker brother to stumble. The enlightened faith which is yours, proclaim it not, for happy is he that does not bring condemnation upon himself by the things which he approves. He that has conscientious scruples about what he eats condemns himself in eating it, for whatever he does contrary to his sense of right is for him a sin.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. Is the conscience always a reliable guide?

2. Public questions that involve the limiting of liberty. David Dudley Field enumerates these six problems as before the American people: honest government, woman suffrage, the negro race, the right of labor, the government of cities, the government of corporations.

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. When are the Philistines first heard of in the Old Testament? (Gen. 10.14.) 2. What three cities of the Philistines did the Israelites take at the beginning of the period of the judges? (Judg. 1.18.) 3. Who was in control in Samson's time, the Philistines or the Israelites? (Judg. 14.11.) 4. What was Samson to do for his people? (Judg. 13.5.) 5. How did Samson first arouse the anger of the Philistines? (Judg. 14.) 6. What is told about their god Dagon in 1 Sam. 5.1–5? What god did they worship at Ekron? (2 Kgs. 1.2.) 7. What was the Nazarite vow? (Num. 6.2–8.) 8. Who did the work of grinding at the mill? (Ex. 11.5; 12.29.) 9. What was Samson's motive in his sacrifice of his life?

BETWEEN LESSON VII AND THE NEXT LESSON

Gideon's rule was followed by that of Abimelech, who gained his ascendency by killing Gideon's sons, kept it by continued bloodshed, and perished at last in a contest at Thebez. Tola and Jair were the two succeeding judges, of whom little is known.

For many years the Philistines oppressed the country west of the Jordan and the Ammonites oppressed the land east of the river, and made also occasional forays against the western tribes. Jephthah was chosen leader of the Gileadites and utterly routed the Ammonites. He had made a vow that if God would give him victory, he would devote to God "whatsoever cometh forth to meet him" on his return. His only daughter came to welcome him, and he "did with her according to his vow."

While the Philistine yoke was grievous in the land, Samson grew up to manhood.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

Judges 16.21–31. (Read Judges 13–16.) Commit vv. 28–30.

Golden Text

Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Eph. 6.10.

LESSON TEXT Judges 16.21–31

21 But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines *were* there; and *there were* upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee; and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than *they* which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

21. *Put out.* Margin, *bored out.*

22. *After he was shaven.* See verses 17–19.

24. *Our god hath delivered,* etc. These words in Hebrew form a sort of popular song or jingle such as Arabs are fond of at the present day. Owing to their grammatical endings, five words rhyme with one another. *Thatcher. The destroyer of our country.* Margin, *who multiplied our slain.*

25. *Make us sport.* Perhaps he was required to exhibit his prodigious strength, but the mere sight of their once powerful enemy, now blinded and

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SAMSON OVERTHROWING THE PILLARS—*Tissot*

in chains, may have been what they made merry over. *Made them sport.* R. V., *Made sport before them.*

26. *The house.* Probably the temple of Dagon. Evidently its flat roof was supported by pillars, and it was open to the court where Samson had stood so that the people there as well as those within and upon the "house" could see him.

28. *Samson called unto the Lord.* It was in consequence of his faith in God that he should be strengthened to overthrow his enemies and the enemies of his country, that he is mentioned, Hebrews 11, among those who were remarkable for their faith. *Clarke. Be at once avenged.* Avenged once for all. *For my two eyes.* R. V. M., *for one of my two eyes.* "Reserve the revenge for the other eye in the world to come, but grant the revenge here for one of the twain," says the Talmud.

29. R. V., *And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested and leaned upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left.*

31. *His brethren.* His kindred. *The house of his father.* Not the household of Manoah, but the whole tribal family to which Samson belonged. *Lias. Zorah* and *Eshtaol* were a mile and a half apart, west of Jerusalem. *Judged.* This does not mean that Samson heard disputed cases and passed sentence upon offenders, but that he was an important man in the community. His history gives only his personal exploits, and does not state how he exercised the functions of "Judge."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

21. *The Philistines.* Who were the Philistines? It is a curious fact that the whole area conquered and inhabited by Israel received its name from the narrow strip which belonged to them. Palestine is the land of the Philistines. The explanation probably is that, being the people located near the shore of the Mediterranean, the Greeks formed their acquaintance, and called the unknown interior by their name.

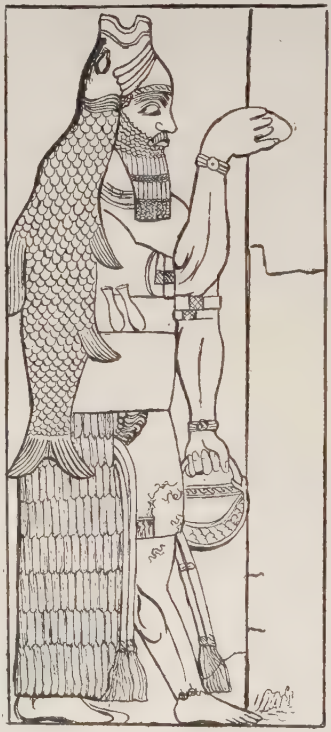
The chief idols of the Philistines were a fish-god (Dagon) and a fish-goddess (Derceto) whose temples were in Ashdod, Ascalon, and Gaza, and a god of flies (Baalzebub) whose temple was in Ekron. *John Marshall Lang.*

22. *The hair of his head began to grow again.* Whether or not the long hair was the real secret of his enormous strength, it is clear that his belief in it was an essential element of his courage. *Henry Ward Beecher.*

Three Nazarites are mentioned by name in Scripture, Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. The Nazarite vow is recorded in Num. 6.2–8.

28. *O Lord, remember me.* We can not pretend to say that Samson and Jephthah, hardly that Gideon or Barak, are characters which we should have selected as devout men, as servants of God. We should, at least if we had met with them in another history, have regarded them as wild free-booters, as stern chieftains, at best as high-minded patriots. They are bursting with passion, they are stained by revenge, they are alternately lax and superstitious. Their virtues are of the rough kind, which make them subjects of personal or poetic interest rather than of sober edification; their words are remarkable not so much for devotion or wisdom, as for a burning enthusiasm, like the song of Deborah; for a chivalrous frankness, as in the acts of Phineas and of

Jephthah; for a ready presence of mind, as in the movements of Gideon; for a primitive and racy humor, as in the repartees of Samson. Yet these characters are without hesitation ranked amongst the lights of the Chosen People; are fearlessly enrolled among God's Heroes; the men in whom we should be inclined to recognize only the strong arm which defends us, and the rough wit which amuses us,— are described as "raised up by God." In a lower degree, doubtless, and mingled with many infirmities, the wild chiefs of this stormy epoch, with their Phœnician titles, their Bedouin lives, and their "muscular" religion, partook of the same spirit which inspired Moses and Joshua before them, and David and Isaiah after them. The imperfections of their character- ters, the disorder of their times, set forth the more clearly the one redeeming element of trust in God that lurked in each of them, and, through them, kept alive the national existence. "By faith," as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not afraid to say, they, too, in their unconscious energy "subdued kingdoms . . . obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions . . . escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." *Stanley,* in *History of Jewish Church.*



The God Dagon. From a Bas-relief on the Walls of a Temple in Assyria. In the British Museum.

28. *That I may be at once avenged.* If this was truly a fine act of self-sacrifice what good came of it? The sacrifice that is to be praised does distinct and clearly purposed service to some worthy cause or high moral end. We do not find that this dreadful deed reconciled the Philis- tines to Israel or moved them to belief in Jehovah. We observe, on the contrary, that it went to increase the hatred between race and race; so that when Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites no longer vex Israel these Philistines show more deadly antagonism.

Samson threw away a life of which he was weary and ashamed. He threw it away in avenging cruelty; but it was a cruelty he had no reason to call a wrong. "O God, that I might be avenged!" that was no prayer of a faithful heart. Had he said to those Philistines, my people and you have been too long at enmity; let there be an end of it; avenge yourselves on me, then cease from harassing Israel,— that would have been a brave man. But it is not this we find. And we close the story of Samson more sad than ever that Israel's history has not taught a great man to be a good man, that the hero has not achieved the morally heroic, that adversity has not begotten in him a wise patience and magnanimity. Yet he had a place under Divine Providence. The dim, troubled faith that was in his soul was not altogether fruitless. No Jehovah-worshiper would ever think of bowing before that god whose temple

fell in ruins on the captured Israelite and his victims. *Robert A. Watson.*

30. *Let me die with the Philistines.*

O dearly bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfilled
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Amongst thy slain, self-killed,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoined
Thee and thy slaughtered foes, in number more
Than all thy life had slain before. *Milton, Samson Agonistes.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

21. *The Philistines put out his eyes.* Assyrian tablets represent the blinding of prisoners by thrusting the point of a spear into their eyes. Cutting off a prisoner's thumbs and great toes was another form of mutilation practised. See 2 Kgs. 25:7 and Judges 1:6.

He did grind in the prison-house. Milton pictures Samson as "eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves." Crushing corn between two heavy stones was hard work, and was always performed by menials and slaves. We look upon no honest work as degrading, but the Philistines and Samson considered this work most humiliating. When the writer of Exodus would include all classes of society in one statement, he placed the Pharaoh at one limit and the grinder of corn at the other. "From Pharaoh that sitteth on the throne, even unto the maid-servant that is behind the mill."

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Gaza, paragraph 131; tribe of Dan, paragraph 130; cities, paragraphs 131–134.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When the people whom we call Greeks came into the country of Greece they sowed grain and planted vineyards and olive groves and raised sheep and goats, but they and their fields were in constant danger from attacks by wild natives and ferocious beasts. Then the strong, heroic young Greeks went out to fight and overpower their enemies. They brought back the hides or the heads of monsters they had slain, and the grateful people in later years regarded these human heroes as half divine; they erected altars and brought offerings to them as to their gods. Of course you have heard about Hercules and his wonderful deeds, and you know all about the lion, the snake, the boar and other animals which he slew unaided. There is an Israelite hero named Samson who was wondrously strong; like Hercules, he killed a lion without weapon of any sort. But the Israelites of his time, while they lived a rude life and were very far from understanding the true nature of God, never made the mistake of supposing Samson to be half-divine; they never made a false god of him and worshiped him as the Greeks did their heroes.

For Older Pupils. Of all the struggles of the Israelites with the other nations of Canaan, none lasted so long nor was so intense as those with the

Philistines. The Philistine plain was one of the richest in all Canaan; it formed a part of the allotment made to the tribe of Judah. The Philistines recovered the cities once taken from them and had the Israelites so completely in their power, that the men of Judah said to Samson, "Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us?" "To begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" was the work of Samson. The portion of his life which our text covers is that represented by Milton in his *Samson Agonistes* and by Handel in his *Samson, an Oratorio.*

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Physical and Moral Strength

Which is Greater? The prowess of Samson and Goliath has always been admired. Physical strength is admirable. Well-developed, hardened muscles are worth a great amount of severe training to secure. But the mere ability to perform prodigious feats of strength or endurance is generally a much overrated ability. A professional athlete's life is pleasant in some respects while it lasts, but it does not last long. There is a young man now earning his living by digging ditches at a dollar and a half a day, who a few years ago received five thousand dollars for nine months' baseball playing.

Peter Jefferson was a giant in stature and strength. It is said that he could raise upright two hogsheads at one time, each weighing one thousand pounds. His son, Thomas Jefferson, was a man of unusual strength, but that fact would never have made him famous. It is as the framer of the Declaration of Independence and as the third President of the United States that he won the lasting gratitude of his country and unending renown.

George Washington was remarkable for the power he possessed in his arms. He could throw a stone across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, a feat which no one else has ever been able to accomplish. Did this make him famous?

Every one will grant that physical strength is desirable, but he must also admit that compared with moral power it is as candle light compared with sunlight. Even in warfare Napoleon said that "moral power is to physical as three parts out of four."

Strength in Weakness. How weak a man is Samson, with all his great prowess and his many sorties against his enemies, when compared with such a strong man as Mr. Walter Wren, in all his physical weakness and long years of suffering. The *Youth's Companion* gives this outline of his life.

At nineteen Mr. Wren was attacked by a spinal disease which gave him incessant, dull pain, with frequent paroxysms of fearful agony. His family and friends felt that there was nothing to hope for in his future but a speedy release by death from this almost unbearable suffering; but young Wren declared that in spite of it he would go on with his studies.

He did so, but was unable to look at a book for so much of the time that nine years passed before he could take his degree. He then chose teaching as his profession, preparing young men for the competitive examinations to enter the Indian civil service.

He had no equal in England in this work. The men prepared by him were not only thoroughly educated, but taught to put work foremost in their lives. Mr. Wren took an active part in English politics, became an influential member of

society, was a witty, cheerful companion, and a loyal friend. Yet the torture of his physical ailment never abated. Sir Walter Besant says of him: "I never knew an instance where so much was done in life against odds so fearful and under conditions so grievous."

The bravery of the soldier on the battle-field is but a momentary flash of flame to the courage which ennobled this obscure life.

II Controlled and Uncontrolled Power

Power not under Control. One who has not himself under control does whatever he happens to feel like doing at all times. Nero was an example of great power out of control. His first violent act after being made emperor of Rome was to have Claudius, the rightful heir, put to death, his next was to cause the death of his own mother. The history of his whole reign seems but the enumeration of one crime after another, for he scrupled not to put out of the way any one who incurred his fear or hatred. He wished to be admired for his own sake, his biographers say, but he was feared and hated in his life and is remembered as the greatest of tyrants because he controlled not himself.

When the armature of a dynamo spins rapidly close to the magnetic field and all its parts are carefully adjusted and controlled, electric power is generated which, conducted through wires, lights a city and propels its cars miles away. Some part of the apparatus may get out of adjustment, and then the engine hums on but no power is created; all its energy is wasted, for lights go out and cars are at a standstill. Human power out of order or not under control is similar wasted energy.

Samson's wonderful power was wasted energy because uncontrolled. He was a machine capable of overthrowing the Philistines and freeing the nation from their dominion, but he used his power only to avenge himself or to suit his own caprice.

Power controlled by God. There are Samson and Goliath, types of great stature and physical strength. There is Alexander in the Old World, and Napoleon in the New, transforming the world by the skill and genius which were theirs. There is Socrates, whose wisdom has left behind him truths which the world will never let die. There is Paul, who wins for his Master the souls of men by the power of a mighty love which he proclaims. All these are types of power, and, therefore, types of manhood. What does Socrates effect more than Samson or Alexander by the power that God has given him, though the Athenians oppose and kill him? Nay, still more: why does Paul outshine all the rest, though he, too, shall meet with every obstacle the world can place in his path, and at last find a martyr's grave? Why does this power shine more than that one in the thoughts and records of men? There is a simple answer: it lasts — that is the highest glory of a man's handiwork. We deem those greatest and best productions which the skill and genius and power of man can produce "immortal." We have no higher word of praise than that. The work which is immortal is the highest and best that can be produced.

Samson and Goliath become but a memory when they pass away; Socrates will never die as long as the world lasts; yet Paul shall take a higher place, for when the things of sense and time shall be outworn the fruits of his labors shall be seen in the roll of God's elect; so, of all powers by every reasonable test, his is the highest of all. He knows it, and tries to make other men share his

knowledge: "Finally, my brethren," he writes, "be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Do we not see another reason for the preëminence of the power of which he speaks? Samson can not say: "Be strong like me;" Socrates can not bid men share his mighty power of intellect; but St. Paul's great conception of the power of manhood is available for all, for God will make it possible. *Edward J. Purchase,* in *The Pathway of the Tempted.*

III What is Heroism?

A Fallen Hero. What has Samson lost when he revealed his secret to Delilah? Observe him when he goes forth from the woman's house and stands in the sunlight. Apart from the want of his waving locks he seems the same and is physically the same; muscle and sinew, bone and nerve, stout-beating heart and strong arm, Samson is there. But he is more lowly than ever before; something is gone from his soul. A heavy sense of faithlessness to one prized distinction and known duty oppresses him. Shake thyself as at other times, poor rash Samson, but know in thy heart that at last thou art powerless: the audacity of faith is no longer thine. Thou art the natural man still, but that is not enough, the spiritual sanction is gone. The consciousness of being God's man is gone — the consciousness of being true to that which united thee in a rude but very real bond to the Almighty. Thou hast scorned the vow which kept thee from the abyss and with the knowledge of utter moral baseness comes physical prostration, despair, feebleness, ruin. Samson at last knows himself to be no king at all, no hero nor judge. *Robert A. Watson.*

A Talk with the Boys and Girls. There is hardly a boy who does not in his heart of hearts wish that he could be a hero, and not a few girls have sighed at the thought that they possess even less chance than their brothers of proving that they, too, were opportunity given, could show themselves capable of doing great deeds. It may be admitted at once that to only a small proportion is it given to gain fame in the world, but there are vast numbers who possess the true spirit of heroism.

True heroism consists in doing what is right, come what may. In war this may mean giving your life for another; in peace it often means sacrificing money, honor, position, for what is honest and right. The first qualification toward heroism is absolute truthfulness. Come what may, be the consequences light or serious, a true boy or girl will never tell a lie. Lying is the mother of cunning, of meanness, and most other vices. Every boy and girl should feel in his or her own heart that a lie is the most contemptible, the most cowardly sin that they can commit; and of all forms of lying, the worst is the cowardly one of lying to escape punishment.

The coward will lie to screen himself; but the boy who has a shadow of heroic feeling about him will boldly confess to his share in the affair and take his punishment.

Next to truthfulness comes unselfishness. There is noble unselfishness in the soldier who will rush out from shelter and risk death in carrying in a wounded comrade. So equally, though in a less striking degree, is the unselfishness of the boy who will set aside his own pleasures for the sake of others.

It is in boyhood and girlhood that true heroism must be felt if it is ever to be attained in riper years. Boys are apt to make heroes of those who are strongest and most skilful in games, and to despise those who are unable from ill

health or constitutional weakness to bear their full share in any sports. They do not reflect that the skill and prowess of their champions are largely the result of good health and physique, and that the shrinking, delicate boy may be as true a hero as the captain of their football or cricket team. *G. A. Henty.*

The Essence of Heroism. There are two kinds of bravery; one which comes from the recollection of self, the other which comes from the forgetfulness of self. An Indian is brave when, out of sheer pride, he lets men drive their burning fagots into his flesh and utters no cry. A fireman is brave when for his duty he rushes into a burning house, and, all scorched and bleeding, brings out the ransomed child. The first is brave by self-recollection. The second is brave by self-forgetfulness. The first has gathered up all his self-possession and said, "Now I will not flinch nor fear because it is unworthy of me." The second has cast all recollection of himself aside and said, "That child will die if I stay here." We need not ask which of these two braveries is heroic.

There is a courage that comes of fear. A man learns that on the whole it is safer in the world not to dodge and shirk, and so he goes on and meets life as it comes. There is nothing heroic about that. A man wants to run away, but because his fear of disgrace is greater than his fear of bullets he stays in the ranks and shuts his eyes and marches on. There is nothing heroic about that. A man is afraid as he sits alone and thinks about a task, but when he gets among his fellow-men, a mere contagious feeling takes possession of him and he is ready to fight and die because other men are fighting or dying, like a dog in a pack of dogs. There is nothing heroic about that. Only when a man seizes the idea and meaning of some cause, and in the love and inspiration of that is able to forget himself and go to danger fearlessly because of his great desire and enthusiasm, only then is bravery heroic. *Phillips Brooks.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

The true hero is the great wise man of duty. *Bushnell.*

A brave man hazards life, but not conscience. *Schiller.*

Self-mastery is the essence of heroism. *Emerson.*

One can not always be a hero, but one can always be a man. *Goethe.*

I dare do all that may become a man,
Who dares do more is none. *Shakespeare.*

Power in control is the man: power not in control is the monster. *J. H. Potts.*

Power self-restrained the people best obey. *Dryden.*

If one is to be a true Christian, one must be a Christian hero. *G. A. Henty.*

He is most powerful who has himself in his power. *Seneca.*

Those who follow that part of themselves which is great are great men, and those who follow that which is little are little men. *Mencius.*

Man's wisdom is to seek
His strength in God alone;
And e'en an angel would be weak
Who trusted in his own. *Cowper.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me. Jer. 9.23, 24.

God is my strength and power. 2 Sam. 22.23.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee. Psa. 84.5.

When I am weak, then am I strong. 2 Cor. 12.10.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. 4.13.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Samson looked upon himself as "Jehovah's man," and in that rude age, so foreign to our own, he was of use, but we can not look upon him as a pattern for ourselves in any respect. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," says Paul. What message can this story of Samson have for us?

His history is not given us "for instruction in righteousness," rather may we consider that these things happened unto him for an ensample, as Paul says in another epistle, and "are written for our admonition." "Let not the strong man glory in his strength," but let him "be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

THE LESSON STORY

The story of Samson, the Israelite Hercules, occupies a sixth part of the book of Judges. It is a story of strange freaks and marvelous exploits, a tale alike of prodigious strength and lowest weakness, told in the language both of comedy and of tragedy. Samson, "judged Israel twenty years," but the best that the historian can say of him is that "he began to deliver Israel."

When Samson had grown to manhood he chose a wife among the Philistines, the enemies of his people. On the way to his marriage he beheld the carcass of a lion, which he had slain on a previous trip without a weapon, and within the body was a swarm of bees and mass of honey. At the marriage feast he propounded to the thirty young Philistines present this riddle:

"Out of the eater came forth meat,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness,"

promising to give them thirty changes of raiment if they guessed it. Unable to do this, they persuaded Samson's wife to learn from him the secret and tell them. Samson kept his promise by killing thirty Philistines in Ashkelon and giving their raiment to the guessers of the riddle. Thus began the contest which Samson unaided waged against the Philistines during many years. One time he punished them by setting their corn and vineyards on fire by means of foxes, whose tails he fastened together, two by two, with a flaming brand between. The Philistines demanded his surrender at the hands of the men of Judah, and they bound him and delivered him to their enemies. Samson easily broke his cords asunder and with only the jawbone of an ass for a weapon "slew a thousand men." At another time he playfully walked off with the gates and posts of the city of Gaza on his shoulders.

At last Delilah, a Philistine woman who lived in the valley of Sorek, succeeded in making him tell her the secret of his strength. He had been dedicated to God as a Nazarite from his birth, he told her; were his long hair, the outward sign of his vow, cut, he would be no stronger than other men. Delilah had

his hair cut off and sent for the Philistines. They bound him and put out his eyes, then made him grind corn in the prison house at Gaza.

The last scene in this Hebrew champion's life is most tragic. It is a gala day in Gaza. The Philistines have gathered from all the country round to hold a feast of rejoicing at the temple of their god Dagon. "Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy," they said. On the roof a great multitude of men and women are assembled to watch the chief men below at their sacrificial meal. Samson is called for; they would see the poor blind giant now wholly at their mercy. Perhaps he hears their words of praise of Dagon and of defiance of Jehovah, the God of Israel, and would prove the power of Jehovah, and perhaps his only desire is to be avenged "for his two eyes." He whispers to a lad who leads him, and they advance to the central pillars supporting the roof. Uttering a cry to God for power, Samson clasps the pillars and exerts all his strength. With a crash the roof falls and Samson and his enemies perish in the ruins.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. No man has come to true greatness who has not felt in some degree that his life belongs to his race, and that what God gives him he gives for mankind. *Phillips Brooks.*

2. The vitally heroic work is the work of the home. It is not a substitute for the fiercer heroism that is occasionally called for outside, but it is the indispensable prerequisite. The heroism of work, the heroism that consists in energetic, unceasing, uncomplaining doing of duty in the ordinary vocations of life — this is as truly the essence of heroism as the most splendid civic courage or military valor. *Theodore Roosevelt.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Read the four chapters of the Book of Ruth. 2. What former lesson showed the meaning of the expression, "The Lord do so to me and more so"? (Lesson VIII, first quarter.) 3. With Naomi's answer to the greeting of the women, verse 20, compare Gideon's answer to the common greeting, "The Lord is with thee," in Josh. 6.12, 13. 4. Where is the word *Marah* first used in the Bible? (Ex. 15.22–26.) 5. What was the law in regard to reaping? (Lev. 19.9, 10.) 6. What was the law in regard to the marriage of Israelites with other nations? (Deut. 7.3.) 7. What was the law in regard to Moabites? (Neh. 13.1.) 8. What relation did Ruth become to David? (Ruth 4.17.) 9. The story of Ruth is remarkable for the Hebrew tolerance shown a foreigner. Because of this the book is thought by some critics to have been written in the time of David. Look up these instances of David's friendliness with foreign people: 1 Sam. 22.3, 4; 2 Sam. 10.2; 28.1, 2; 29; 17.27–29.

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The last five chapters of Judges are aptly called the appendix of the book. They contain unconnected events which occurred, it is thought, much earlier in the history of the Israelites. Here are narrated the migration of a part of the tribe of Dan to the far north of Palestine, and their settlement in the plain at the foot of Mount Hermon.

LESSON X — DECEMBER 8

RUTH'S WISE CHOICE

Ruth 1.14–22. (Read Ruth 1–4.) Commit vv. 16, 17.

Golden Text

Thy people shall be my people,
and thy God my God. Ruth 1.16.

LESSON TEXT Ruth 1.14–22

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.
15 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.
16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God.
17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, *if aught* but death part thee and me.
18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.
19 So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, *Is* this Naomi?
20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.
21 I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?
22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab; and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

14. *They.* Naomi, a widow, and Orpah and Ruth, the widows of Naomi's two sons. *Orpah kissed her mother in law.* The Greek version adds, "and returned to her people." *Clave.* Clung to, remained with.

15. *Her gods.* R. V., *her god.* The god of Moab was Chemosh. (Num. 21.29; 1 Kings 11.33.)

16. *Entreat me not.* Margin, *Be not against me.* See verses 8–13.

17. *The Lord do so to me and more also.* A common form of oath. See Lesson VIII, first quarter.

19. *They came to Bethlehem.* Naomi's earlier home. See verses 1–6. *They.* R. V., *the women.*

20. *Naomi.* Margin, *Pleasant. Mara.* Margin, *Bitter.*

21. *I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.* She left with her husband and two sons, and probably with considerable property; she returned bereft of her family and in want.

22. *In the beginning of the barley harvest.* This harvest was soon after the passover feast in the month Nisan, which corresponded nearly to our March.

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RUTH GLEANING—*Tissot*

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

16. *Ruth said.* As an expression of the tenderest and most faithful friendship, these words are unrivalled. The simple dignity of the iteration in varying phrase till the climax is reached beyond which no promise could go, the quiet fervor of the feeling, the thought which seems to have almost a Christian depth — all are beautiful, pathetic, noble. *Robert A. Watson.*

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Rouse us from what is low! *Longfellow.*

17. *If aught but death part thee and me.* No doubt the story is a love story, and is designed to set forth the power of love to overcome all the alienations, hostilities, and prejudices of nature and of that second nature which we call "habit." But it is not a story of romantic love between a young man and a young woman. It is the story of a woman's love for a woman; and, strangely as it would sound in the ears of our modern wits, it is the story of a young wife's passionate and devoted love for her mother-in-law. Ruth's tender, self-sacrificing affection for Naomi is the very charm of the story. It is in the strength of love that she abandons Moab and her father's house; it is in the strength of love that she also conquers the prejudices and jealousies of Bethlehem, and compels even Hebrews to admire her virtue and record her fame. And in that it was by her love for Naomi that Ruth was brought to know and serve the only wise and true God, we may see an illustration of the fact that men and women are often led to religion by natural affection, and rise to the love of God through their love for one another. *Samuel Cox.*

18. *She was steadfastly minded.* Steadfastness is one of the virtues crowned by history. Whether seen in Antigone of the Greeks — that ideal sister who would not desert even the dead body of her brother — or in Penelope, who trusted for twenty years in the returning ships of her husband, or in the disciples around Christ who died at last, here and there, in obedience to their attachment, or in the long line of martyrs whose blood is sprinkled all over the leaves of history, this steadfastness stands forth in unwavering excellence. *David Swing.*

19. *Is this Naomi?* This expresses the general astonishment at the change which had passed upon her. No doubt the little hamlet had been all aflame with gossip when, ten years before, the rich sheep-master, Elimelech, had left it, and many pious brows had been shaken over his sin in going to sojourn among the heathen. And, no doubt, on Naomi's return, many who would have shared that sin if they could, and many who had committed far worse sins than any of which she had been guilty, once more shook their heads in grave rebuke, and were found to recognize the judgments of an offended God in the calamities which had

befallen her. It may be feared that there was more blame than pity in the ejaculation, "This Naomi!" *Samuel Cox.*

20. *Naomi.* At a time when personal names meant something, she bore the name "Winsome." Sadness, quietness, strength, these make the notes of her life melody; but she has had the rare gift of making quiet strength attractive. *R. S. Moulton.*

22. *Ruth returned with her.*

From age to age, from clime to clime,
A spirit bright as her own morn
She walks the golden fields of Time,
As erst amid the yellow corn. *Thomas Buchanan Read.*

22. *The Moabites.* Moab had been the eyesore of Israel. It had blocked her passage through the desert. It had given her its solemn malediction. It had leagued against her with Midian. It had proved a grave to her lawgiver, Moses. *George Matheson.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

14. *Ruth clave unto her.* Naomi's daughters in law had gone a short distance with her on her way according to Eastern custom. Farewells seldom take place in the house in the East. Now Naomi thought that they had gone far enough to show fitting respect for her, and she stopped to dismiss them.

15. *Thy sister in law is gone back unto her people.* That the two young widows should return each to her mother's house and marry again in Moab is Naomi's urgent advice to them. The times were rude and wild. A woman could be safe and respected only under the protection of a husband. Not only was there the old-world contempt for unmarried woman, but, we may say, they were an impossibility; there was no place for them in the social life. People did not see how there could be a home without some man at the head of it. It had not been strange that in Moab Hebrew men should marry women of the land; but was it likely Ruth and Orpah would find favor at Bethlehem? Their speech and manners would be despised and, dislike once incurred, prove hard to overcome. Besides, they had no property to commend them. *Robert A. Watson.*

17. *Where thou diest will I die and there will I be buried.* Recall the expression so frequent in the Old Testament history, "buried with his fathers." This showed the climax of Ruth's devotion, for to be buried in a strange land was almost as abhorrent to the oriental people then as to the Chinese now.

17. *The Lord do so to me.* It was sometimes the custom to slay an animal when a formal oath was taken, and the words used, "The Lord do so to me," meant that the one uttering them asked to have the same fate as the victim if he failed to keep his oath.

19. *All the city was moved about them.* The western world has little realization of the interest taken in another's neighbors in the eastern world. Tidings of the return of a citizen quickly spread, and not only neighbors but "all the city" come to pay their respects to him before, perhaps, he has greeted his own family, and they are expected to remain a long time and be hospitably entertained.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Moab, paragraph 113; Bethlehem, paragraph 142; cities, paragrahs 135–139.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. When last year the Prince and Princess Charles of Denmark were chosen by the Norwegian people to be their King and Queen, the old King of Denmark sent his grandchildren away from Copenhagen with his blessing in these words: "My dear grandchildren, I hope that God may lend you power and strength to serve your country and people with loyalty and righteousness. In this way you will win for yourselves the love of your people, and will feel yourselves Norwegians, chiefly in working for the happiness and future of your country. Go with God, my dear grandchildren, from the land and race that bore you, to the land and people which have called you, and take with you now and for ever the blessing of your old King, for you, your race and your deeds. I commend you to God."

A young woman who lived in the far-distant times we are studying was leaving for ever the land which bore her, and though she was a humble girl, she was destined in the land to which she was going to become the great grandmother of their great King David. She had yet to win the love of the people she was going among, for they did not feel friendly toward one who came from her country of Moab. She succeeded, because she "went with God," as good King Christian counseled his grandchildren.

Famine in the land of Canaan ten years before this had brought to her country an Israelitish family.

For Older Pupils. When Benjamin Franklin was United States Minister in France he read the story of Ruth at a social gathering one evening; his hearers expressed their delight in its charming simplicity and inquired in what book this idyl could be found! Goethe has called the book of Ruth "The loveliest little epic and idyllic whole which has come down to us."

No greater contrast could be found than between the Book of Judges and the Book of Ruth. In turning from one to the other we pass from wild scenes of bloodshed to quiet domestic life, and it seems difficult to realize that both were a part of the same time and land. The events recorded in the book of Ruth belong to the time of the Judges, but critics differ as to which Judge was the contemporary of Ruth. Some place her history in the time of Gideon, but the greater number agree with Josephus, who places it in the time of Eli. The first verse of the first chapter of the book states that it was "in the days when the judges judged," but Israel was under the rule of the Judges for nearly five centuries. We know, however, that Ruth's son was the father of Jesse, the father of David, and this makes it seem reasonably certain that Ruth lived in Eli's time.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Thy God shall be My God

Ruth's Decision. The answer of Ruth implies a religious change — conversion. She renounces Chemosh and turns in faith and hope to the God of Israel, and this is the striking feature of her choice. Divinely seen, the grace and righteousness of the Most High touched her soul, commanded her reverence, drew her to follow one who was His servant and could recount the wonderful story of His people. Surely it is a supreme event in any life when this

vision of the Best allures the mind and engages the will, even though knowledge of God be as yet very imperfect. *Robert A. Watson.*

Nay, falter not; 'tis an assured good
To seek the noblest; 'tis your only good
Now you have seen it, for that higher vision
Poisons all meaner choice for evermore. *George Eliot.*

Prudent Suspense. In one of those wonderful entries which Phillips Brooks was accustomed to make in his diaries during his student days, he speaks of a true life as being marked by positive action, and not by prudent suspense. It was an early revelation of the splendidly vital conception which he held of religion. It is, indeed, supreme folly to attempt to live in a condition of precarious balance in opinion and action. Prudence is a virtue which easily tends to become a vice, and is always such when, in the presence of a clearly defined issue of right and wrong, it induces men to dally or delay. *Zion's Herald.*

A Glad Choice. Christ is chosen often as the least of two evils; as, at least, better than the wrath and curse of God. The soul flees to Him as the traveler flees to the great rock in the weary land — not as the living child flees to its living mother. The gallop over the plain, the saunter amid the palm-trees, sweet dalliance in garden or grove, would be infinitely more delightful; but then the fierce wind, the blinding sand, the burning sun, are unendurable, and the shadow of the rock a kindly shelter; the best thing in the circumstances, not the best possible. Ah, my brother, Christ does not want you to love Him as you love a sheltering rock, but, as you love a MAN — a living soul like yourself. He wants you to love Him as your Chief Good, as the noblest Friend your heart can love, the grandest Being your spirit can know. *A. M. Fairbairn.*

The Terrible Choice. The poet Browning speaks of "Life's business being just the terrible choice." "The most awful and the most splendid fact in human life to me is this," says Doctor Lyman Abbott, "that God puts the reins of my destiny into my own hands, and neither holds the reins before nor behind me." From an editorial in the *Sunday School Times* come these words. To each and to all God says, "Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death," and it is for every man to choose between these two. God has foreordained the freedom of every man's will. Apart from all the influences of ancestry and surroundings, or as it is said in modern phrasing, "heredity" and "environment," the real self of the man has to choose whether he will go up or go down. God is constantly inviting every man to choose the good and to refuse the evil. God also holds men back when they would rush to their destruction, while He is thus inviting and urging them to be saved. "Why will ye die?" is His constant call to those going astray. Yet at the last as at the first, God permits a man to make his persistent and final choice of his destiny. If a man is lost, it is because he chooses to be lost.

Why Mr. Moody insisted upon Immediate Decision. One Sunday night in Chicago Dwight L. Moody chose for his text "What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" and his closing words to his immense congregation were: "I wish you would take this text home with you and turn it over in your minds during the week, and next Sunday we will decide what to do with Jesus of Nazareth." That night the great fire broke out and many of his audience perished. Mr. Moody never forgot the impression thus made upon him of the lost opportunity, and in all his work afterwards he never said, "We will decide next week," but rather "We must decide now that thy God shall be my God."

II Unselfish Devotion

Famous Friendships. There are many noted friendships about which one never tires of reading, especially of Goethe and Schiller, Charles and Mary Lamb, Luther and Melancthon. Said Martin Luther of Philip Melancthon; "Philip is a wonder to us all. If the Lord will, he will beat many Martins as the mightest enemy to the devil and scholasticism. I am the rough woodman who has to make a path; but Philip goes quietly and peaceably along it, builds and plants, sows and waters." Said Melancthon of Luther: "Luther supplies the place of all my friends. He is greater and more admirable in my sight than I dare express." There are no recorded friendships more beautiful than that of David and Jonathan, and of Ruth and Naomi. The unselfishness, sincerity, and trust shown in the love of David and Jonathan for each other, and the affection and devotion of Ruth for Naomi, have not been excelled in all the world's literature.

The Elements of True Friendship. There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named. One is truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. . . . The other element of friendship is tenderness. When a man becomes dear to me I have reached the goal of fortune. The end of friendship is a commerce the most strict and homely that can be joined. It is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death. It is fit for serene days and graceful gifts and country rambles, but also for rough roads and hard fare, poverty and persecution. *Emerson.*

Loftiness of Friendship-Love. Friendship-love is unselfish, and is not common. A love that is dependent on its return by its object is a craving-love, and not a friendship-love; for friendship-love is ever out-giving and on-going, and never waits or wavers because it is not appreciated, or is unrequited. Such love is ideal, but instances of it are not alone in imagination. In every relation of life they stand out along the course of time to brighten and inspire the best phases of human nature. An instance of it in an unlooked-for quarter has recently commanded the respect and admiration of the community. Michael O'Donnell of New York City was convicted of burglary with murderous attempt, and sentenced to thirty years in Sing Sing prison. It now seems that, though he knew all the time that his brother John was the guilty man, and he was innocent, he refused to attempt to clear himself at the expense of his brother. For ten years he suffered on in prison silently. His brother, who knew this, never spoke a word or lifted a finger for his help. At last, on his death-bed, the guilty man confessed his wrong and declared his brother's innocence. When the hero-brother was told, in prison, of the death and confession of the unworthy culprit, who had shown himself without love or gratitude, he said, in his ever out-giving and on-going love, that he would have remained in prison the whole thirty years to have shielded his loved brother. Another instance of such friendship-love has been brought to light by a newly proposed bill in the United States Senate. A young volunteer soldier in the Union army deserted from the ranks, taking the risk of arrest and execution. An older brother, looking much like him, urged him to return to duty. When he refused to do so, that brother put on his uniform and reported in his place in the army, served out the term of enlistment, fighting and being wounded in service in his

brother's name. Is not such fidelity and devotion a prompting and an evidence of the love than which there is no greater or worthier in the human heart? *Sunday School Times.*

Large is the life that flows for others' sakes,
Expends its best, its noblest effort makes.
Devotion rounds the man and makes him whole;
Love is the measure of the human soul. *James Buckham.*

III Decide, and then Abide

Ruth a Heroine. "An ever-varying and changeable thing is woman," wrote Vergil. He did not know Ruth, whose firm resolve to accompany Naomi and share her lot and her religion, so steadfastly taken that nothing could move her, has made her a famous example of unvarying and unchangeable womanhood. Emerson says that "The hero is the man who is immovably centred." Then Ruth is a heroine. She has always been given due meed of praise for her loving devotion to Naomi, but she deserves commendation no less for her resolute immovableness of purpose.

Some one has said that we can not imagine Ruth in after years, even though her lot had remained that of the poor gleaner and laborer, returning upon her decision and weeping in secret because she thought she had made a foolish choice. Her mind was too clear and firm for such repentance. Her resolve had been taken, not weakly, nor wilfully, but deliberately and thoughtfully; and being capable of clear resolve, she was capable also of steadfast constancy to her resolution.

The Lesson Henry Ward Beecher Learned. Henry Ward Beecher tells an interesting story about his school-days. He was demonstrating a problem when his teacher calmly said "No." "I hesitated," he says, "and then went back to the beginning, and on reaching the same part again 'No!' uttered in a tone of conviction barred my progress. 'The next!' and I sat down in red confusion. He, too, was stopped with 'No!' but went right on, finished, and, as he sat down, was rewarded with 'Very well.' 'Why,' I whimpered, 'I recited it just as he did, and you said No!'

"'Why didn't you say Yes and stick to it? It is not enough to know your lesson. You must know that you know it. You have learned nothing till you are sure. If all the world says No! your business is to say Yes and prove it.'

"In less than a month," adds Beecher, "I had the most intense sense of intellectual independence to defend my recitations."

The Infirm Will. In his *Holy War* Bunyan has described a Mr. Anything. No one could ever tell to which side he belonged, for sometimes he was fighting on one side and sometimes on the other, and when his leg was broken in the fight Bunyan says that "He who did it wished that it had been his neck."

Several years ago party leaders were considering the nomination of a candidate for the governorship of one of our states. The story is told that a dinner party defeated the nomination. The party leaders who were with him heard him order quail and then change his order for pheasant. When the pheasant was brought he told the waiter he had decided to have both quail and pheasant. Both plates were at last set before him and then he shoved them aside in disgust. "Take them away!" he said, "I won't have any game at all." "The man who is so irresolute that he can not decide what meat to eat lacks an essen-

tial quality that is needed as the governor of this state," was the verdict of the leaders.

Do you know whence comes our word "vice?" It is from the Latin word *vitium,* which is cognate with the Latin word *vitis* meaning a vine. Do you not see the connection? A vine is weak and is easily turned aside from its course. A man who is weak in will, irresolute, vacillating, is easily turned aside from the path of virtue.

The Firm Will. In our best moods we all make noble resolutions. At least we call them resolutions, but too often they are merely thoughts to which the attention of our wills has not been called. It is because our wills have not been invited to the conference that our so-called resolutions have no more effect than the great things we accomplish in our dreams. There was a son in one of Christ's parables who said to his father, "I go, sir," and yet he went not, to the work in the vineyard. His words were lightly spoken, his resolution had not been firmly made. The other son said, "I will not." His resolve had been taken, but taken wrongly. Afterward he repented and went.

Having decided what is right to do, and having resolved to do what is right, let us stand as firmly by that resolve as Fitz-James in Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* when Roderick Dhu's armed followers suddenly rose on every side of a wild mountain pass —

"His back against a rock he bore
And firmly placed his foot before;
'Come one, come all! This rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I!'"

SENTENCE SERMONS

The truest wisdom is a resolute determination. *Bonaparte.*

Only people whose God is the Lord of humanity can win the people to God. *Pestalozzi.*

Right promptly done is twice right; right delayed
Turns wrong. *Browning.*

It is only the great-hearted who can be true friends; the mean and cowardly can never know what true friendship means. *Charles Kingsley.*

I am constant as the Northern Star,
Of whose true-fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament. *Shakespeare.*

Friendship that flows from the heart can not be frozen by adversity, as the water that flows from the spring can not congeal in winter. *J. Fenimore Cooper.*

Consider well, weigh strictly, right and wrong; resolve not quick — but once resolved be strong. *Lines engraved on a sword presented to Charles J. Fox.*

He who every day makes a fresh resolve is like one who, arriving at the edge of the ditch he is to leap, for ever stops and returns for a fresh run. *J. Bahnsen.*

How easy is the thought, in certain moods, of the loveliest, most unselfish devotion: how hard is the doing of the thought in the face of a thousand unlovely difficulties. *Macdonald.*

Men who live for self never succeed in satisfying self, or in quite satisfying anybody else; men who live for others in Godlike unselfishness, have joy themselves while giving joy to others. *H. Clay Trumbull.*

So long as we love we serve; so long as we are loved by others I would

almost say that we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend. *Robert Louis Stevenson.*

Not to be impulsive, not to be spurred hither and thither by each desire that in turn comes uppermost; but to be self-restrained, self-balanced, governed by the joint decision of all the feelings in council assembled, before whom every action shall have been fully debated and calmly determined — that it is which education, moral education at least, strives to produce. *Herbert Spencer.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Rom. 14.5.

Cleave unto the Lord your God. Josh. 23.8.

Be kindly affectioned one to another. Rom. 12.10.

Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Prov. 31.30.

Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. 1 Cor. 15.58.

Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not. Prov. 27.10.

Many waters can not quench love;
Neither can the floods drown it. Sol. Song 8.7.

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Prov. 18.24.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death. Prov. 48.14.

For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 8.38, 39.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

We have seen in Ruth's beautiful character constancy of purpose, tenderness of affection, unselfishness of devotion, heroism of conduct, and implicitness of trust in God. Do we not need to make our lives more like hers in each one of these respects? Are we true to our high resolves, thoughtfully tender in our relation to those we love, and unselfish in our devotion to them? Have we, like Ruth, made the great choice? Do we love and obey and trust our God?

THE LESSON STORY

In the days of the Judges an ancient Hebrew family of Bethlehem, Elimelech and his wife Naomi with their two sons, left Canaan for the land of Moab to escape a famine. There the sons married two daughters of Moab.

After ten years Naomi and her daughters in law, Ruth and Orpah, were left alone, the father and sons having found their graves in alien soil. Naomi determined to return to her home in Bethlehem, and sadly her daughters accompanied her part way on her journey. Then she bade them leave and return to their own people, for in her land she could not help them to establish new homes for themselves. Orpah returned, but Ruth's love for her mother led her to forsake all for her. No stronger expression of devotion in all literature can be found than

Ruth's immortal words to Naomi: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and whither thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more so, if aught but death part thee and me." Can we wonder that Naomi ceased trying to persuade Ruth to leave her?

They came to Bethlehem, and though "the whole city is moved about them," no one seems to have offered help. Naomi told the women to call her Mara, Bitter, rather than Naomi, Pleasant, for she went away with husband and sons and returned bereft of them all.

It was the time of barley harvest, and Ruth went out to glean after the reapers so as to support her mother and herself. Providentially she was led to the fields of Boaz, a prosperous kinsman of Elimelech. Boaz honored her for her devoted care of Naomi, and beautiful are his words to her: "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Ruth the Moabitess, the daughter of an alien and hated race, by the constancy and unselfishness of her devotion to her mother, and the heroism which no sacrifice nor privation could daunt, by the strength and yet gentleness and humility of her character, not only won the love of Boaz but overcame the prejudice of the people against her and secured their acceptance of her as one of the people of the God of Israel. As the wife of Boaz she found that "asylum" which Naomi had thought could not be hers in the Hebrew land, and as the ancestress of Israel's great king, King David, she is honored above all the Hebrew women of her time.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. What is the purpose of the book of Ruth?

2. What men need, in order to be happier and better than they are, is not more knowledge of what is right — they are amply supplied with that; or the pressure of plentiful good purpose and the desire to do the right — hell itself is paved with good intentions; but what is needed is strength of will, firmness and stability of character. *T. H. Cheyne.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. According to Josephus, Samuel had just completed his twelfth year when the word of the Lord came to him. What happened to Jesus when twelve years old? (Luke 2.42–52.) 2. What words in an earlier lesson are recalled by the repetition of the call to Samuel and his answer? (Ex. 3.4.) 3. Read in Job 4.12–17 the account of a revelation made to Job at night. 4. Review God's vision to Abraham in lesson VIII of the first quarter. 5. How did Samuel show his affection, humility, piety, self-sacrificing spirit, sense of duty and of justice? 6. In 1 Sam. 2.27–36 read the first announcement to Eli of the fate awaiting his house. 7. Compare Eli's submissive spirit with David's in 2 Sam. 15.24–26. 8. What became of Eli's sons? (1 Sam. 4.10, 11.) 9. How did Eli meet his death? (1 Sam. 4.12–18.)

THE BOY SAMUEL

1 Samuel 3.1–21. (Read 1 Sam. 1–4.) Commit vv. 8–10.

Golden Text

Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. 1 Samuel 3.9.

LESSON TEXT 1 Samuel 3.1–21

1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision.
2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see;
3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God *was,* and Samuel was laid down *to sleep;*
4 That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I.
5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.
6 And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.
7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.
8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.
9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.
10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.
11 And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.
12 In that day I will perform against Eli all *things* which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.
13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.
14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.
15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.
16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here *am* I.
17 And he said, What *is* the thing that *the Lord* hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide *it* not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide *any* thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.
18 And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It *is* the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good.
19 And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.
20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel *was* established *to be* a prophet of the Lord.
21 And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *The child Samuel.* Josephus says that he had just completed his twelfth year when the word of the Lord came to him. *Ministered unto the Lord.* Aided Eli in the services of the temple. *Precious.* R. V. M., *rare. No open vision.* R. V., *no frequent vision.*

2. *It came to pass at that time.* What follows in this and the third verse is parenthetical, verse 4 being the conclusion of this first statement. *And his eyes began to wax dim.* R. V., *now his eyes had begun to wax dim so that he could not see. Wax.* Grow.

3. *And ere the lamp of the Lord went out.* R. V., *and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was. The lamp of the Lord.* The seven-branched golden candle-stick which stood opposite the table of shew-bread in the holy place. Lights were probably put out before sunrise.

4. *Here am I.* Hebrew, Behold me, the regular formula for expressing attention to a call and readiness to obey. Compare Gen. 22.1; Is. 6.8. *Kirkpatrick.*

7. *Samuel did not yet know the Lord.* He "knew" Him as all devout Israelites did, but he had as yet received no direct revelation from Him.

10. *The Lord came and stood and called.* The Voice became to Samuel the Vision. See verse 15.

11. *I will do a thing in Israel.* The astounding punishment predicted was the defeat of Israel by the Philistines, the capture of the ark, and the death of Eli's sons and of Eli himself. See the next chapter. *The ears shall tingle.* See 2 Kgs. 21.12; Jer. 19.3.

12. *All things which I have spoken.* See chapter 2.27–36. *When I begin, I will also make an end.* R. V., *from the beginning even unto the end.* Completely.

13. *Judge.* Punish. *Which he knoweth.* R. V., *which he knew. Because his sons made themselves vile.* R. V., *because his sons did bring a curse upon themselves.*

14. *Purged.* R. V., *expiated.*

17. *God do so to them and more so.* May the fate of the victim slain at the taking of an oath be thine. A form of imprecation used in Ruth, Samuel, and Kings.

18. *Every whit.* Every thing.

19. *The Lord did let none of his words fall to the ground.* God fulfilled all His prophecies.

20. *From Dan even to Beersheba.* An oft repeated expression for "all Canaan."

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

9. *Thou shalt say.* Eli was the one in Israel to whom, naturally, a revelation should have come. God's priest and God's judge, to whom, so fitly as to him, could God send a message? But another is preferred; the inspiration comes to Samuel, and Eli is superseded and disgraced. Besides this, every conceivable circumstance of bitterness is added to his humiliation — God's message for all Israel comes to a boy; to one who had performed for Him servile offices. This was the bitter cup put into his hand to drink. And yet Eli assists him to attain

his dignity. He perceives that God has called the child. He does not say in petulance — "Then let this favored child find out for himself all he has to do, I will leave him to himself." Eli meekly tells him to go back to his place, instructs him how he is to accept the revelation and appropriate it. *F. W. Robertson.*

13. *I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth.* Eli had associated his two sons — Hophni and Phinehas — with him in the priesthood, perhaps as assistants in his feeble age. They had shown themselves, however, wholly unworthy of the sacred office. Stooping to the level of the debased idolatry around, they had taken part in the impurities that defiled the neighborhood of the tabernacle, and had thus brought discredit on the worship of Jehovah among the few who still clung to the purer faith of their fathers. Nor was this all. The duties of the sanctuary at large were treated by them with insolent, overbearing disrespect. The very offerings were rudely seized for their own tables, and the sacred office, as a whole, used only for the gratification of their unbridled self-indulgence.

Such a desecration of functions so lofty and awful might well have called forth the sternest reprobation from Eli, as at once the High Priest and Judge of Israel, but it was still more binding on him as the father of the transgressors. Eli, however, though he may have been rigorous in his earlier years in other respects, had no adequate sense of paternal authority, and contented himself with a mild rebuke, when the most unbounding severity was demanded, if lighter measures failed. *Cunningham Geikie,* in *Old Testament Portraits.*

19. *And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him.*

Go up and on! thy day well done,
Its morning promise well fulfilled,
Arise to triumphs yet unwon,
To holier tasks that God has willed.

Whittier.

20. *Samuel was established to be a prophet.* The vigorous and connected ministry of the prophets begins with Samuel, who is therefore to be regarded as the true founder of the Old Testament prophetic order (compare Acts 3 .24). It was that extraordinary time when, with the removal of the ark, the tabernacle had lost its significance as center, the high-priest's functions were suspended, and now the mediatorship between God and the people rested altogether in the inspired prophets. *Oehler.*

21. *The Lord revealed himself to Samuel.* It is, with perhaps one exception, the earliest instance of the use of the word which has since become the name for all divine communication. "The Lord uncovered his ear,"— such is the literal expression; a touching and significant figure, taken from the manner in which the possessor of a secret moves back the long hair of his friend, and whispers into his ear thus laid bare the word that no one else may hear. It is a figure which precisely expresses the most universal and philosophical idea conveyed by the term "revelation," thence appropriated in the theological language both of the East and West. "The Father of Truth," says an eminent scholar, "chooses His own prophets, and He speaks to them in a voice stronger than the voice of thunder. It is the same inner voice through which God speaks to all of us. That voice may dwindle away, and become hardly audible; it may lose its divine accent and sink into the language of worldly prudence; but it may also from time to time assume its real nature with the chosen of God, and sound into their ears as a voice from Heaven." *Stanley.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Shiloh, paragraph 140; Ashdod, paragraph 132; Beth-shemesh, paragraph 134; cities, paragraphs 141–148.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. You remember a lesson which we had early in the year about Abraham's pleading with God for the righteous people in Sodom.

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The Call of Samuel. From a Painting by Tissot.

In that lesson what was said about the way in which Abraham brought up his household? In whose way were the children taught to walk? Our lesson today gives us a glimpse of a very different family life. We see a father who, though a high priest himself and a faithful follower of God, nevertheless failed to bring up his sons in the way they should go, and now in his old age their sins are bringing down his "gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." With this high priest, whose name is Eli, was a young lad named Samuel. Samuel's mother had brought him when a little child to Eli, because she wished to

"lend him to the Lord," as she said. Samuel had remained and helped Eli in caring for the tabernacle. When he was about twelve years old a strange event happened.

For Older Pupils. There seems to have been a lull in the struggle with the Philistines, a struggle which, till the time of David, was not only for the supremacy in Canaan but for national life itself. When we are introduced to Eli he is already an old man, and holds the office of both high priest and judge at Shiloh where the ark still rested in the place it had been set up by Joshua. Eli is not only old but weak of will. His two sons are utterly wicked, and yet they assist him as priests. The moral and religious as well as political life of Israel is at a low ebb. In this crisis who shall be raised up to lead the chosen people? If we did not know his later history, we would realize from the full account of his childhood that the historian regarded Samuel as one of the great national leaders. And indeed he proves to be second only to Moses.

Those early chapters of the book of Samuel were the delight of Luther's heart; with unwonted tenderness he would read and reread them, for to turn from his own strenuous and turbulent activities to the child Samuel "ministering before the Lord," was a restful change.

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I The Call of the Lord

A Helpful Comparison. We set in motion the vibrating air, or leave a few black lines upon the paper. The ear of our friend receives the undulating air, and by its subtle mechanism transforms the air waves into the unseen, intangible thought. Or the eye mirrors the few black scrawls upon the paper, and along the delicate nerve fibers transmits the image which becomes a reflection of the original thought. A marvelous process, whose middle point we can comprehend, but which withdraws at either end, in the mind of the sender and in the mind of the receiver of the message, behind the veil of impenetrable mystery. Why should it be thought a thing incredible, if men can thus exchange thought by means of the air, or the paper, that God should be able to speak directly to the heart of His child without the aid of any sensible medium? "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." *Edward McArthur Noyes.*

Admiral Farragut's Message. When Admiral Farragut was entering Mobile Bay the monitor *Tecumseh* was suddenly sunk by the explosion of one of the torpedoes with which the bay was mined. The *Brooklyn* was behind the *Tecumseh,* and her Captain, seeing the monitor's fate and the buoys which indicated the torpedoes, began backing his ship upon the *Hartford* and the *Richmond.* What must be done? A cross fire was pouring upon them from the enemy's vessels and from Fort Morgan; to go ahead meant probable destruction from the hidden torpedoes, to retreat meant defeat. Farragut was lashed up aloft on the *Hartford,* and in his dire need he prayed to God for guidance. "O God, who created man and gave him reason, direct me what to do. Shall I go on?" were the words of his prayer, he said afterwards, and then added, "It seemed to me as if in answer a Voice commanded, 'Go on!'"

The Admiral shouted "Four Bells!" the signal for full speed, and as the fleet obeyed, the cases of torpedoes were heard knocking against the bottom of the passing ships, but none of them exploded and the bay was safely entered.

Opportunities are Calls. "It's very noble in you, Elsie, to give so much of your time to that work among the tenement house children. I'm sure I admire you for it; but for my part I never had any call to that kind of work."

"Any call?" Elsie's eyes were gravely questioning.

"Yes, of course. I suppose you felt called to go into it, didn't you?"

"I don't know. I don't think I ever thought of it just that way. I saw the need of something that I had time and strength to do, that was all. But wouldn't that be call enough?"

Would it not indeed? What plainer call can there be than a need that we can meet? . . . Let us find in "the duty that lies nearest" our present definite call, sure that when we are wanted for another work, that, too, will be shown us. Opportunity — that is God's clear call to us. *Young People.*

II Speak, Lord; for Thy Servant heareth

First the Vision, then the Work. Before any work for God always comes the vision of God. I have had men say to me, "Didn't Paul's Christian life begin with the question, 'What wilt thou have me do?'" No, it did not; no life begins with that question. It begins with the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" When Paul had settled that it was the risen Christ who appeared to him; then came the much easier question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" *W. H. P. Faunce.*

Obedient to the Vision. When Savonarola was a lad he was wont to spend many an afternoon strolling along the river Po with his grandfather. Once after a long silent rest the boy suddenly said to his companion, "There are voices calling me." "Yes, I believe it," said his grandfather; "you must listen for the Voice." This thought that he was destined for some special task never left him, and his constant prayer was, "Lord, teach me the way my soul should walk!" When at eighteen he entered the monastery at Bologna he sent word to his friends, who had not known his purpose, "I have listened to the Voice." After a few years there he was sent out to preach to the churches near by, and then to Florence. Here he felt, and rightly, that the true message had come to him, that he had received God's commission to purify the Church from its iniquities. When ordered by the Pope to cease preaching he answered, "I must preach, because God has called me thereto," and his last words before he died a martyr's death, were, "My Lord was pleased to die for my sins; why should not I be glad to give up my poor life out of love to Him?"

Lincoln's Faith. "One rainy night I could not sleep," said President Lincoln to a physician. "The wounds of the soldiers and sailors disturbed me; their pains pierced my heart, and I asked God to show me how they could have better relief. After wrestling some time in prayer, He put the plans of the Sanitary Commission in my mind, and they have been carried out pretty much as God gave them to me that night. Doctor, thank your kind heavenly Father, and not me, for the Sanitary Commission."

Ready for the Work. Perhaps there is no characteristic in which men are more different from one another, or which creates more different careers, than this characteristic readiness, this promptness and immediateness of life. When God called Moses, his answer was, "Here am I." He was already somewhere; that was his starting-point. He was already where God had put him, and therefore he was ready to proceed to whatever God should call him to.

Readiness is often success. He who says, "Here am I" when a new need summons, carries off the prize. The engine does not know in what quarter of the city the fire will break out, but it stands with its horses all harnessed and its fires laid, that it may start in a moment when the midnight telegraph startles it with its alarm.

It is a very beautiful thing that a man is often ready for a duty which he is never called upon to perform; and if he is truly ready for it, he gets the same blessing for his readiness that he would from the performance of the act. The outward career is not essential. This is what comforted Milton when, lamenting the helplessness of his blindness, he remembered that "They also serve who stand and wait." God knows not only what to do, but what we are ready to do.

This readiness redeems for us our commonplace lives. It does not criticize its duty, does not care whether it seem small or great. The greatest tasks that we are called to do are insignificant in themselves; and the smallest tasks are mighty if they come from God. So many people are quick to cry, "Here am I!" at the top of their voices when a great, showy task is to be done, but some obscure duty, that no man will see if they do it, goes begging here and there and finds no one who welcomes it.

All duty is one to the soul that asks not, "What shall I choose?" but, "What wilt Thou have me do, O Lord?" So we present ourselves to Christ for His mercy and His service here; and then some day in Heaven we lay our hands to the perfect service in the perfect world, saying anew, "Here am I."

"Ready to go, ready to wait,
Ready a gap to fill;
Ready for service small or great,
Ready to do His will." *Phillips Brooks.*

III Let Him do what seemeth Him Good

Passive Submission. "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good," said Eli, but in saying this, he was a false witness for God. Eli was passively submissive; he was not unwilling that God's will be done. But God had made His will plain that this too acquiescent father should exercise some active will of his own toward those worthless sons of his. Eli would not do that. He still drifted on, passively acquiescent, burying the best talent God had given him. However amiable his disposition, he remained a fatally will-less man. And therefore that was no day of power in Israel; it was the day of shameful defeat. Name the new-born child Ichabod, for the glory is departed. And so the glory will depart wherever men so pervert the doctrine of submission to the sovereign will of God. The true doctrine of God's sovereignty will never produce men of the Eli type. The true doctrine of divine sovereignty will show that God calls men to will.

Suppose you should ask the well-disposed citizens of any great city — New York or Philadelphia — whether they were willing that their city should have a thoroughly honest, decent, economical administration of government? What one of them would hesitate to answer, "Yes;" or they might rather stare in silent amazement at so senseless a question. "Willing!" They are more than willing to be well-governed. But no; often they were so much less than willing to be well-governed. It is true, they had no objection to better government, but they were not willing it. The strength of their will was all used up and ex-

hausted in a thousand other duties; they had none left for municipal politics. *William R. Richards,* in *God's Choice of Men.*

Is the Condition Avoidable or Unavoidable? It would be an act of folly to be resigned to a disagreeable condition of affairs if that condition were avoidable. A man is bound to get its fullest extent of happiness out of life, and it is a sacred duty to do so. He ought to do his utmost endeavor to make his environment as pleasant and as cheerful as possible. If he foresees an evil he should carefuly plan to get it out of his way and work hard to accomplish that object. There is no reason why we should not extract from passing time the very best and pleasantest it is capable of furnishing. It is as much an injunction of religion to do this as it is to be just and honest and charitable.

The same rule holds good when a disagreeable condition is permanent and unavoidable; that is to say, it is a duty to take the brighter rather than the more somber view of the situation and finds as much peace and happiness as the circumstances contain. There is no life so narrow that it does not hold more of good than we at first think conceivable.

There are no circumstances in which we may not build character, and character is all there is to live for. Be patient, therefore, and the morning will break at last. Be cheerful even in the twilight of illness greatly prolonged and the shadows will disappear.

When the painful experience can be avoided your efforts must not cease, but when the unavoidable occurs fit yourself to it, let it be your mission to use it to your soul's advantage, and you will learn that no life is without peace and joy. Resignation is itself a source of comfort and happiness. *George H. Hepworth.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

God often calls us, but generally we are not at home. *Abbé Roux.*

Too many take a vision as a compliment instead of as a command. *Sunday School Times.*

If God writes "opportunity" on one side of open doors, He writes "responsibility" on the other side. *J. T. Gracey.*

God is more ready to forgive the blotted page of endeavor than the blank page of surrender. *Selected.*

The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day. *Milton.*

I believe that if you and I were more to heed the whispers of our Father, we should not have so many of His thunders. *J. H. Evans.*

If any one of us finds again that "one clear call for me" it will be by resolutely refusing to listen to some other calls. *Sunday School Times.*

He who obeys with modesty appears worthy of some day or other being allowed to command. *Cicero.*

We are God's little children — that is our claim upon His pity and His love; we must treasure the child-like gifts — obedience, trust, readiness to learn. *Purchase.*

The surest method of arriving at a knowledge of God's eternal purpose about us is to be found in the right use of the present moment: each hour comes with some little fagot of God's will fastened upon its back. *F. W. Faber.*

Do not let the loud utterances of your own wills anticipate nor drown the still, small voice in which God speaks. *Alexander Maclaren.*

Yet still there whispers the small voice within,
Heard through God's silence, and o'er glory's din,
Whatever creed be taught, or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God. *Byron.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Prov. 29.18.

The people, therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him. John. 12.29.

For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Micah 7.6.

He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. John 14.21.

He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3.30.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts 26.19.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Why is it that one person hears the Voice of God and another does not? Will the word of the Lord be revealed to one who does not know the Lord? Will His message be heard by one who, having ears to hear, hears not? What we need above all things else is to take time to listen to God's Voice in His revealed Word, in communion with Him, and in the oracle within ourselves. If we are spiritually deaf there can be for us no open vision.

THE LESSON STORY

There was a devout woman named Hannah who brought her three year old son to Eli, the high priest at Shiloh, to "lend him to the Lord" in gratitude for his birth. She had given her boy the name of Samuel, which means "Asked of God." She wished him to grow up in the service of the sanctuary. Every year she came with her husband to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord, and each time she brought Samuel a coat which she had made.

As he grew older Samuel helped Eli in the services of the tabernacle. When he was about twelve years of age, he was awakened from sleep one morning just before dawn and thought he heard Eli calling him. The high priest was now old and half blind, and Samuel naturally supposed he wished some assistance, but Eli told him to lie down again, for he had not called him. A second and a third time Samuel heard the voice and ran to Eli, and then Eli told him it was the voice of the Lord, and directed him to answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Then came God's message to him that Eli's sons had been very wicked and Eli had not restrained them, therefore God would punish them severely. In the morning Samuel feared to distress Eli by telling him the message, but Eli besought him to hide nothing from him. "It is the Lord," said Eli, "let him do what seemeth him good."

Thus the boy priest was called to the high office of prophet at a time when "The word of the Lord was rare, and there was no frequent vision;" and we see him established as the leader of the religious life of Israel throughout the length and breadth of the land.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. You can not manage to rule the world by good nature: there must be justice and retribution as well as pity, affection, and love. Through Eli's dislike to do painful things, through that amiable indolence that made him hope that all things might right themselves, he got himself entangled in the evil of other men's lives. The result was that the people were demoralized more and more. *W. S. Elmslie.*

2. It is not drunken parents who are most dangerous to the generation that follows; for by their excesses they very often create a reaction in their children. It is careless parents, shifty, and insincere parents, parents with no impressive sense of the reality of God and His government, or of the natural persistence and irremediableness of sin. If we are hasty, if we are wanting in self-control in little temptations, or if, while ostensibly religious, we be insincere; or have no sense of the awfulness of sin and of its certain effects; or if we tamper with the truth or compromise our consciences, while outwardly respectable and regular in life — we are infecting our children with just that evil which in them may break out to violent and ruinous extremes. *George Adam Smith.*

WORK TO BE ASSIGNED FOR THE NEXT LESSON

1. Look up the marginal references in your Bible to the words which are selected for the Golden Text. 2. On what occasion did Jesus quote those words? (Matt. 4.10.) 3. What other instances of Samuel's prayers are recorded? (1 Sam. 8.6; 12.17, 18, 23; 15.11.) What is said of him in Psa. 99.6 and Jer. 15.1? 4. What traits of Samuel's character are shown in 1 Sam. 12.3, 4; 15.22, 23; 15.32, 33? 5. How do Psa. 62.8; Lam. 2.19, and 2 Sam. 14.14 help explain the meaning of the symbolical act recorded in verse 6? 6. What is thunder called in Psa. 29.3, 4? 7. Besides the stone erected to commemorate some great events, what other memorials were preserved by the Israelites? (The pot of manna, Ex. 16.33; the table of the Law, Ex. 34.35; Aaron's budding rod, Num. 17.10; the sword of Goliath, 1 Sam. 21.9.) 8. Narrate the events connected with the removal of the ark from Kirjath-jearim. (1 Chron. 13 and 15 and 16.1.)

BETWEEN THIS LESSON AND THE NEXT

The Israelites engaged in battle with the Philistines and were defeated. The elders then sent to Shiloh for the ark and bore it into battle, but they were defeated again with great slaughter and the ark was taken. When the news was brought to Eli, that both his sons had been slain and the ark captured, he fell off his seat and his neck was broken. The ark remained in the country of the Philistines seven months and then they sent it to Beth-shemesh, and with it a "trespass offering," because calamities had come to the people wherever it was kept. The men of Beth-shemesh were smitten in great numbers because they looked into the ark, and they sent word to the people of Kirjath-jearim to come and get it.

SAMUEL THE UPRIGHT JUDGE

1 Sam. 7.1–13. (Read 1 Sam. 5–7.) Commit vv. 12, 13.

Golden Text

**Prepare your hearts unto the Lord,
and serve him only. 1 Sam. 7.3.**

LESSON TEXT 1 Samuel 7.1–13

1 And the men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, *then* put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only.

5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured *it* out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered *it for* a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set *it* between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

13 So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

1. *Fetched up the ark.* In response to the message from the people of Kirjath-jearim, 1 Sam. 6.21. *Sanctified.* Set him apart for this special duty.

2. *While the ark abode.* R. V., *from the day that the ark abode. Twenty years.* The twenty years of which there is no record before Samuel instituted

his reformation now recorded. *Lamented after the Lord.* In the margin of the Revised Version this is translated "was drawn together after the Lord."

3. *Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* R. V., *put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, and direct your hearts unto Jehovah.* They were the gods of a foreign people. *Put way.* Destroy these images and their altars and groves. *Serve him.* Worship him.

4. *Baalim and Ashtaroth.* R. V., *the Baalim and the Ashtaroth.* These words are plural; the Baalim were the gods and the Ashtaroth the goddesses of the Canaanite nations.

5. *They gathered together.* The sequel shows that they came armed. *Fasted on that day.* As on the great Day of Atonement; the pouring out of the water was doubtless symbolical of the pouring out of their hearts in penitence before the Lord. *And Samuel judged the children of Israel.* This would seem to indicate one purpose of the assembly, to constitute him their judge, who before this had been their prophet alone.

7. *The Philistines went up against Israel.* Any attempt at organization by the Israelites could only mean their intention of throwing off the Philistine yoke.

9. *For a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord.* R. V., *for a whole burnt offering unto Jehovah. Heard.* R. V., *answered.* Verses 10 and 11 give the answer.

11. *Beth-car.* The site has not been identified.

12. *Ebenezer.* Margin, *the stone of help. Hitherto.* Up to this time.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FROM HELPFUL WRITERS

2. *It was twenty years.* What was Saul doing during the twenty years that the ark was at Kirjath-jearim? We can answer that question only conjecturally, only from what we know of his general character. It can not be doubted that in some way or other he was trying to make the nation sensible of its sins against God; to show them that it was to these sins that their subjection to the Philistines was due; and to urge them to abandon their idolatrous practices if they desired to return to independence and peace. Perhaps he began at this period to move about from place to place, urging those views, as he moved about afterwards when he held the office of Judge (7.16). And perhaps he was laying the foundations of those schools of the prophets that afterwards were associated with his name. Whenever he found young men disposed to his views he would doubtless urge them to steadfastness and progress in the way of the Lord. *W. G. Blaikie.*

2. *All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.* What the nation had to be taught was a sense of its own sin, as well as wretchedness. It had to be brought to realize the height of privilege from which in its perversity it had fallen, and the depth of miserable moral and spiritual abandonment to which it had sunk. A yearning after Jehovah as the chief good had to be awakened in the nation's heart. And this these twenty years of bitter but healthful discipline have accomplished. With a oneness of feeling and of purpose, which, in outwardly more prosperous days, they had too long failed to exhibit, "All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord." Plainly, they have been learning and unlearning much. God is a reality to them; so is their sin: so is their need of God. *Charles A. Salmond.*

6. *They drew water and poured it out before the Lord.* The pouring out

of the water before the Lord betokened, not only that the people's hearts were poured out in repentent sorrow, but that the vows of that solemn day were never to be revoked, but were "like water spilt upon the ground which can not be gathered up again." It was Israel's way of saying that there was nothing kept back in their covenant with God; that theirs was a full and final surrender to Him; that they had burnt their bridges, and cherished no thought of keeping open a retreat to the far country of apostasy, from which they had come back again to God. *Charles A. Salmond.*

13. *The hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.* Yet we find the cities groaning under the Philistine oppression (9.16): a garrison of a tribute-collector stationed at Gibeah (10.5; 13.3): a general disarmament of the nation by the Philistines (13.19, 20): Hebrew slaves in the Philistine camps (14.21): and three invasions of the land (13.5; 17.1; 23.27): all during Samuel's lifetime. We must then understand the statement in the text as either (a) "a general expression allowable in such a brief survey as here given:" or (b) as referring only to the time of Samuel's active judgeship. In the latter case we may conjecture that the Philistines reëstablished their ascendency in his old age, in consequence of the weak and corrupt government of his sons. *Kirkpatrick.*

LIGHT FROM ORIENTAL LIFE

6. *They drew water and poured it out before the Lord.* To pour water on the ground is a very ancient way of taking a solemn oath in the East. *Roberts.* We have here a ritual survival from the nomad period of Hebrew history. After the change to the present life of Canaan, water, the most precious of desert offerings, was supplanted by the fruit of the vine. *Kennedy.* Pouring out water, in the way of libation, was a religious ordinance among the Hebrews and among most other nations, particularly the Greeks and Romans, who used, not only water, but wine, milk, honey, and blood. *Clarke.*

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Kirjath-jearim, paragraph 134; Mizpah, paragraph 144; Ebenezer, paragraph 136; cities, paragraphs 149–153.

THE APPROACH TO THE LESSON

For Younger Pupils. A little girl began to count the stars one evening, but after she had counted about two hundred she said, "O dear, I never thought there were so many!" "Count your blessings one by one" are the words in a song which you may know; if we always did this we should be surprised to find them so many. What way did the Israelites take to keep in mind the great blessings they received from God? When Jacob had his vision that never-to-be-forgotten night at Bethel what did he do the next morning? What did Joshua do to recall the crossing of the Jordan? When did he erect another stone and for what purpose? (Lesson VI.) When the boy Samuel of our last Sunday's lesson became the judge and leader of the Israelites he, too, erected a stone to recall God's help received against the Philistines. What recent lesson told about the Philistine victories? Did Samson accomplish much toward freeing the

Israelites from this enemy? In Eli's old age they fought and conquered the Israelites, and took away the ark.

For Older Pupils. Samuel is remembered in Israelitish history as prophet, reformer, judge, and leader; a man second only to Moses among their great men. The book of 1 Samuel gives a full account of his birth and childhood and then, save for the 7th chapter, which forms our lesson to-day, records only his old age when he is a participator in the events connected with Saul and David. We wish that we knew more about his active years, but we need only to compare the condition of the Israelites in Eli's days with their condition when, strong in their belief in the Lord, they overthrew the Philistine yoke, to realize how great a man he was and how well he deserved his great reputation. Perhaps if we knew more about his history, we should go further and declare him to be the second founder of the true religion among the Israelites. These words of Tennyson in his Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington aptly apply to Samuel: —

"The statesman warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself — a common good;
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time.
Rich in saving common sense,
And as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true."

LESSON THOUGHTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I Prepare your Hearts unto the Lord and serve Him only

By their Fruits ye shall know them. Let your life without prove the reality of your conversion within — as a life of steadfastness, animated by a heart "prepared, or fixed, unto the Lord," and as a life of devotedness — of single-hearted devotion — to a single Master. "Fix your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only."

Samuel is wisely founding here on the principle afterwards so plainly announced by that Greater Prophet of whom he was a type — "By their fruits ye shall know them." He was placing before these Israelites tests to which, whether conscious of it or not, all professing converts are in the sight of God subjected still. *C. A. Salmond.*

Serving God brings Knowledge of God. We all know the difference between hearsay and sight. We may have read books of travel, that tell of some scene of great natural beauty or historic interest, and may think that we understand all about it, but it is always an epoch when our own eyes look for the first time at the snowy summit of an Alp, or for the first time at the Parthenon on its rocky height. We all know the difference between hearing about a man and making his acquaintance. We may have been told much about him, and may be familiar with his character, as we think, but, when we come face to face with him, and actually for ourselves experience the magnetism of his presence, or fall under the direct influence of his character, then we know that our former ac-

quaintance with him, by means of hearsay, was but superficial and shadowy. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes see Thee." Can you say that?

There is all the difference between knowing about God and knowing God; just the difference that there is between theology and religion. We may have all the articles of the Christian creed clear in our understandings, we may even, in a sense, believe them, and yet they may be absolutely outside of our lives. And it is only when they pass into the very substance of our being, and influence the springs of our conduct, it is only then that we know God. . . . God is a person, and to know Him does not mean to understand about Him, but to be on speaking terms with Him, to have a familiar acquaintance with Him, to "summer and winter" Him, and so by experience to verify the things that before were mere doctrines. . . . One act of obedience from the heart will teach us more of God than all the sages can. It is more illuminating simply to do as He willed than to read and think and speculate and study. "If any man wills to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." And mutual possession of God by us, and of us by God, leads to fuller knowledge. To possess God is to love Him; and "He that loveth knoweth God, yea! rather is known of God." *Alexander Maclaren,* in *Triumphant Certainties.*

Let me find in Thy employ
Peace that dearer is than joy;
Out of self to love be led
And to heaven acclimated,
Until all things sweet and good
Seem my natural habitude! *Whittier.*

How shall we serve God? "We think our Sabbath services, our prayers, our Bible reading, are our religion," says Professor Drummond: "It is not so. We do these things to help us to be religious in other things. These are the mere meals, and a workman gets no wages for his meals. It is for the work he does." How we can be "religious in other things," Spurgeon has tersely stated in these words: "Serve God by doing common actions in a heavenly spirit, and then, if your daily calling only leaves you cracks and crevices of time, fill them up with holy service." It is given only a few to lead such a life of service as did Florence Nightingale, but her explanation of the way in which she was enabled to accomplish so much is most illuminating: "If I could give you information of my life, it would be to show how a woman of very ordinary ability has been led by God in strange and unaccustomed paths to do in His service what He has done in mine. And if I could tell you all you would see how God has done all and I nothing. I have worked hard, very hard, that is all; and I have never refused God anything."

II Our Ebenezers

Petitions and Thanksgivings. As Abraham journeyed from one place to another he erected altars to commemorate his appreciation of God's mercies to him. Gradually Canaan was dotted over with memorial stones. Jacob and Joshua erected them to recall some signal blessing received from God. Ebenezer, "A stone of help," Samuel calls his stone, for "hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The Israelites had been greatly afraid when they learned that their enemies, the Philistines, were coming to attack them, and had said to Samuel

"Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." "The Lord heard him," and the Philistines were routed, and Samuel did not fail to acknowledge his gratitude to God for His aid.

"And hearts say, 'God be pitiful!'
Which ne'er said, 'God be praised!'"

is true of the great multitude who, like Samuel, are ready to ask God's help, but unlike him, are not mindful of expressing their gratitude for that help. Each one has abundant reason to set up his Ebenezer and to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me," for he needs only to "measure his mercies by the foot-rule of his deserts" to realize how great is his debt of gratitude to God. There is an old and well-known parable which shows how ungrateful most of us are. Two angels left the gate of Heaven one morning, one with a small basket in which to collect men's prayers for blessings, and the other with a large one in which to bring back their thanksgivings; but on their return the small basket was heaped up and the bearer was laden with huge bundles and sacks of prayers besides, while the large basket had only a few small thanksgivings at the bottom.

Nearly every one has a memory that can always be depended on to recall all his trials and sorrows, but is equally sure to forget all his blessings. Were we to keep a record of the mercies of God our libraries would not hold the books, some one has said, while, were we to write our gratitude, a very small diary would suffice.

Doctor Babcock suggested that it would revolutionize life if we would only set aside one day in the year for murmuring and complaining, for giving expression to all our pent-up annoyances and grudges and slights, and be thankful all the rest of the year, instead of reversing this as so many do who set aside one day in the year for thanksgiving and grumble by impulse the three hundred and sixty-four other days!

"A child of God should be a visible beatitude for joy and happiness," said Spurgeon, "and a living doxology for gratitude and adoration."

Gratitude and Growth. In that splendid story which makes a man despise himself for all laziness and yearn to do something worth while, *Black Rock,* there is a bit of keen analysis that we may not have noticed as we were borne along in the rapid movement of the tale. Old man Nelson had begun again his fight for manhood the night before, and came into Black Rock to spend Christmas day, where Craig, wisest of parsons, met him and inquired how the battle had gone. Nelson, full of fear, admitted that he had not lost his grip, but his heart was full of foreboding. Craig answered his question almost sternly: "I'll bet you haven't thought it worth while to thank Him for keeping you where you are over night." The old man turned quickly and went into the stable; a few moments later he came out and his face was lighted up with a trembling joy.

It is a quiet illustration of a great principle. Gratitude is a necessary element in the growth of the spirit. There is an essential connection which we too often forget between gratitude and growth.

The best way in which to banish fear concerning the future is to recall the experiences of the past which are the warrant for hope. Perhaps we have the too narrow conception of prayer. We think of it as chiefly concerned with petition. But it is also very largely concerned with thanksgiving. And it is a serious mistake to leave out this essential element. Indeed, there is a fine spiritual quality which is seldom spoken of among us. It is the quality of

appreciation. Every teacher knows how fundamental this is in the growth of a pupil's mental or spiritual powers. The pupil who is not sensitive, who does not respond, gives little hope of progress. But the pupil who appreciates values and responds to influence makes progress. The growth of the spirit depends upon this very spiritual temper. To appreciate the good gifts of God and to live gratefully is to make progress. One effective bar against all growth is found in a lack of sensitiveness or appreciation of the goodness of the Father. Gratitude means growth. The fair result of its exercise is that gleam of courage which is seen in the face of every man who keeps it truly. *Zion's Herald.*

III The Scene of Defeat may become the Scene of Victory

God gives the Victory. In the first part of the fourth chapter of 1 Samuel we read that the Israelites fought with the Philistines near Ebenezer and lost four thousand men, and in a second encounter their loss was thirty thousand. For twenty years they endured the Philistine oppression, and then after they returned to the worship of Jehovah and besought His aid the scene of their former defeats became the scene of their great victory.

After the battle of Waterloo a despatch was sent to England by the semaphore-telegraph. "Wellington defeated" were the words received, and then a dense fog came up. For three long days London lamented, but with the reappearing sun came the rest of the message, — "the French at Waterloo!" A like change from mourning to rejoicing may be ours when with God's aid our defeat is changed to victory.

The Apostle John in Youth and in Old Age. We think of the apostle John's nature as one in which the gentler affections abounded, and fancy that he had less difficulty than have most people in entering into his Master's thoughts and purposes of love. We speak of men of that disposition — Neander, for instance — as Johannine natures. And thus we fail to do justice to the triumph of divine grace in the Apostle's character, who, no less than Paul, might have said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

The synoptic Gospels give us no reason for ascribing an especially affectionate and lovable character to any son of Zebedee. The appearances of the two brothers at the outset indicate nothing more than their comparative wealth. It was early in the third year of our Lord's ministry that the brothers exhibited their temper of mind by proposing to call down fire upon the Samaritan village. Our Lord treats the proposal, many ancient authorities say, not as an isolated or transient fact, but as a disclosure of character. He answers them, according to all the early translations, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." That He gave them the name of "Sons of Thunder" was due, probably, to this occurrence. Towards the close of the year, as He was proceeding to Jerusalem to His passion, Salome made the request that her sons should have an especial place of honor in His kingdom. The sons seconded her request very heartily, and not in a way which indicated a loving spirit. It is true that John is described by himself five times as "that disciple whom Jesus loved," but never as "that disciple who loved Jesus" in any especial sense. "We love him because he first loved us" (1 John 4.19) may well have been an autobiographic reminiscence.

The result in John's gentle and affectionate old age is the fruit of grace, not

of nature. He has become the loving John, who writes "the Gospel of the heart of Christ" because he has been brought so near that heart by Jesus' loving care. Grace has triumphed in him. The fruit which once was so bitter and acid is now mellow and sweet. They carry him to the church in Ephesus when he is too weak to walk. They hold him up in presence of the people when he is too feeble to stand. The last of the Twelve repeats to them the same sermon Sunday after Sunday, and it is simply, "Little children, love one another." "Why tell us that again and again?" they ask. "Because that is enough, that is all." Love is enough.

And what our Lord did in John He can do in us. He can take us, in all our defects and deformities, and make us a proverb for perfection in the very qualities we lack the most. *Sunday School Times.*

The Smile of Defeat. A young Englishman once failed to pass the medical examination on which he thought his future depended.

"Never mind," he said to himself. "What is the next thing to be done?" and he found that policy of "never minding" and going on to the next thing the most important of all policies for practical life. When he had become one of the greatest scientists of the age, Huxley looked back upon his early defeat and wrote:

"It does not matter how many tumbles you have in life, so long as you do not get dirty when you tumble. It is only the people who have to stop and be washed who must lose the race."

Twenty years ago Lindon Bates of Chicago was compelled through lack of funds to discontinue his course at the Sheffield Scientific School and begin work for a railroad. Some years later he secured the contract for building two miles of the Chicago drainage canal, and invented for use there a dredging-machine which attracted immediate attention. To-day the Volga River is being dredged by his machines, a dozen rivers and ports of Australia and Tasmania, the difficult harbor at Calcutta and another at Antwerp. The International Congress of Navigation recently awarded him a gold medal; and upon hydraulic engineering in navigation he is ranked as the highest living authority.

To assert that present defeat is not incompatible with future success is merely to repeat one of those fundamental truths which, like submerged piers, support the bridge of life. *The Youth's Companion.*

Noble souls, through dust and heat,
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger.
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer. *Longfellow.*

SENTENCE SERMONS

What is religion but loyalty to God? *Horace Bushnell.*

He who enjoys aught without thanksgiving is as though he robbed God. *The Talmud.*

What is defeat? Nothing but education; nothing but the first step to something better. *Wendell Phillips.*

It is a comely fashion to be glad:
Joy is the grace we say to God. *Jean Ingelow.*

A thankful heart to God for His blessings is the greatest blessing of all. *Lucas.*

Seek to cultivate a buoyant, joyous sense of the crowded kindnesses of God in your daily life. *Alexander Maclaren.*

God's acceptance of imperfect service seems to me a glorious thing. *Phelps.*

In all we plan to do, and all we do
Still keep us to Thy service true. *John Hay.*

God's design is to give the chances of victory, and then by every victory gained to put another sword of victory in your hands. *Horace Bushnell.*

Many favors which God giveth us ravel out for want of hemming, through our own unthankfulness; for, though prayer purchaseth blessings, giving praise doth keep the quiet possession of them. *Thomas Fuller.*

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain,
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain—
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake. *Robert Louis Stevenson.*

THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER

Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord. 1 Lam. 2.19.

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Psa. 62.8.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name. Psa. 100.4.

In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. 4.6.

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15.57.

Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 5.18–20.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; because his mercy endureth forever. Psa. 118.1.

A PERSONAL THOUGHT

Who could tell the debt of gratitude we all owe to God? Do we ever allow a day to pass without offering words of thanksgiving to Him for His many blessings? If we are not grateful, it is because we do not perceive the good, because we are inattentive to the things for which we should be grateful. If we will resolutely determine to look for the good that is ours we shall feel impelled to give thanks to the Giver of all good. Nor shall we be content

with this utterance alone, for that would be only a selfish thanksgiving. Our debt of gratitude is not paid, true thanksgiving is not rendered, till we have given willing service in return. We will prepare our hearts unto the Lord and serve Him only.

THE LESSSON STORY

The death of Eli and his sons left the Israelites without a leader. Samuel was their prophet, but he seems only gradually to have attained his position as their deliverer. After the ark was returned by the Philistines, it was brought to the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, and his son Eleazar was appointed to care for it, but it seems merely to have been allowed to stay there and was no longer the rallying point for the tribes for religious worship. The people had sunk to gross idolatry. Twenty years passed of which we have no record, but at their close we see a great change in the people. During these years Samuel had reawakened the spiritual and national life. The time was ripe for action. The people had acknowledged their sins and professed their desire to turn again to Jehovah. "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts," said Samuel, "then put away the strange gods and prepare your hearts unto the Lord and serve him only." The people put away their false gods, and Samuel called a great national convention. At Mizpeh, in the tribe of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem, they met and fasted and poured out water on the ground in token that their vows "like water spilt upon the ground which can not be gathered up again" could not be revoked. While they were thus met for religious service they saw the combined Philistine forces approaching to punish their refractory subjects who had thus dared to meet in council. No doubt Samuel had anticipated such an attack. The people were afraid, but they remained steadfast and entreated Samuel to plead with God in their behalf. Samuel offered a lamb as a whole burnt offering and prayed earnestly to God for aid. The Philistines rushed to the attack, and then came God's answer to Samuel's prayer in the crash of mighty thunders. The panic-stricken enemy fled and the Israelites pursued and utterly routed them. To commemorate this great victory Samuel erected a stone and called it Ebenezer, the Stone of Help, as a witness to all that it was God who gave the victory.

Peace followed and Samuel became the last and greatest of all the judges, judging Israel till a king was chosen. With the establishment of a monarchy a new era began in Israelitish history. After six months study of the book of John, our lessons next year take up again the history of the Israelites at this point.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE CLASS DISCUSSION

1. The influence of one great leader.

2. A prophet is one who speaks for God; and there are more true prophets to-day than ever before since the world began. *Sunday School Times.*

3. In the exhaustless catalogue of Heaven's mercies to mankind, the power we have of finding some germs of comfort in the hardest trial must ever occupy the foremost place; not only because it supports and upholds us when we most require to be sustained, but because in this source of consolation there is something we have reason to believe of the Divine Spirit. *Dickens.*

REVIEW

Read Psalm 98

Golden Text for the Quarter

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness. Psa. 65.11.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF JOSHUA 1 to 1 SAMUEL 8.

Lesson I. After the death of Moses the word of the Lord comes to Joshua to cross the Jordan, promising to give him all the land as He had promised Moses, and bidding him be strong and very courageous, ever mindful of the words of the law through meditating upon them day and night. Then Joshua directs the officers to go through the camp and command the people to prepare food for a journey, for in three days they are to pass over the Jordan and possess the land.

Joshua reminds the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh of their promise to help the other tribes in their conquest of Canaan, and they agree to do whatever he commands. Two spies are sent to Jericho, and their lives are saved by Rahab, who conceals them from the King's men. In return for this the spies promise that her life and that of her family shall be spared in the attack on the city. The spies report to Joshua that the inhabitants of Jericho are in great terror of the Israelites.

Lesson II. The Israelites encamp on the east bank of the Jordan, which has overflowed its banks and is not fordable. The officers tell the people that when they see the priests take up the ark they are to follow it, but there must be a space of two thousand cubits between them and the ark. To Joshua the word of God has come directing their passage of the Jordan, and he bids the people sanctify themselves, for God is about to do wonders among them. At the command of Joshua the priests take up the ark and enter the river, which becomes a dry river-bed before their feet, for the waters far above are held back and the waters below flow away to the Dead Sea. The priests with the ark stand still in the middle of the Jordan bed, and all the great company of people pass safely over.

Twelve men, one man from each tribe, have been selected by Moses to take stones from the river-bed where the priests are standing to be heaped up in Gilgal, their first camping place beyond the Jordan, as a memorial of that marvelous crossing. These men also pile up twelve stones in the Jordan bed where the priests are. The priests now bear the ark across, and the Jordan again flows downward and covers the place where they have crossed.

At their camp in Gilgal the uncircumscribed receive that rite; the first Passover in Canaan is observed; the long-furnished supply of manna ceases; "The Captain of the Lord's hosts" appears to Joshua.

Lesson III. The city of Jericho is now to be captured. The inhabitants think themselves safe within their walls, but Joshua, at God's bidding, begins a strange warfare. Once a day for six days a procession consisting of a guard of armed men followed by seven white-robed priests blowing trumpets and other priests bearing the ark, with a rearguard of unarmed, silent warriors, marches around the city walls. On the seventh day they march around seven times, and then at Joshua's command the priests blow their trumpets and all give a mighty shout, for God has given them the victory. The walls fall, and they enter and burn the city, sparing only Rahab and her people.

All the gold and silver, brass and iron of Jericho are saved for the sanctuary. Achan disobeys the order forbidding any one to take anything for himself, and to his sin is attributed the defeat of the Israelites at Ai. He is put to death for his disobedience. A second attack on Ai is successful. At Mount Ebal Joshua erects an altar to God, and there the blessings and the cursings in the law are read as Moses had directed, half of the people standing by Mount Ebal and half by Mount Gerizim. The Kings west of the Jordan unite against Joshua. The Gibeonites, craftily disguising themselves as travelers from a far distant country, succeed in making a league with the Israelites, who, on discovering the deceit, keep their promise but condemn the Gibeonites to perpetual service as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the sanctuary. Joshua, aided by a hailstorm, rescues Gibeon from a combined attack of five Amorite Kings. "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon," commands Joshua while in pursuit of his foes. The Israelites capture city after city in southern Palestine and return to their camp at Gilgal. They are equally successful in their northern campaign, routing the allied forces on the plain by Lake Merom and capturing their cities.

Lesson IV. The conquered land is now to be apportioned among the tribes. Caleb, accompanied by the children of Judah, the tribe to which he belongs, comes to Joshua with a request. At God's direction Moses had promised him, he reminds Joshua, because he had wholly followed the Lord and given a true and courageous report as one of the spies sent from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, that he should receive as his reward the hill country of Hebron. Although eighty-five years old he is strong and vigorous, and especially desires the task of conquering the fierce Anakim who dwell there. Joshua blesses him and grants his request.

After the tribes of Judah, Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their portion, and the tabernacle has been set up at Shiloh, the remainder of the land is divided into seven portions and given by lot to the remaining seven tribes, for the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had previously received their inheritance east of the Jordan. Joshua receives a city in the hill country of Ephraim.

Lesson V. The six cities of refuge, already planned for by Moses, are now appointed: Kedesh, Shechem, and Hebron west of the Jordan; and Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan east of that river. To one of these cities a manslayer may flee, and if he succeeds in satisfying the elders at the gate that he has killed another unintentionally, he is admitted. After being acquitted "before the congregation," he may remain there safe from the avenger of blood till at the death of the high priest he may safely return to his own city.

The Levites receive by lot forty-eight cities from other tribes. The two tribes and a half from east of the Jordan receive Joshua's blessing and are sent home. On their way they build an altar to God, but the other tribes think it is designed for idolatrous worship and they threaten to wage war against their brothers till convinced of their true purpose.

Lesson VI. Joshua is now old, one hundred and ten years of age, and realizing that he has not long to live he calls the officers of the people to him, and after reminding them of all God's mercies he exhorts them to put away all idols and fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth. "Choose you this day whom you will serve; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," he proclaims. "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord," the people answer. "The Lord will not forgive your sins if ye forsake him," admonishes Joshua, but the people a second time and again a third time declare their allegiance to Him. "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." Joshua erects a great stone under an oak as a witness and reminder of their solemn covenant with God, and not long afterwards death comes to him.

It is not long before we read that "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim. . . . Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. . . . And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He said. . . . I will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died." Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, deliver them from various enemies, and Gideon is called by God to deliver them from the oppression of the Midianites. Gideon destroys Baal's altar and offers sacrifice to the Lord. The signs he asks of God to prove that He will save Israel by his hand are granted him. He raises an army of thirty-two thousand, which is reduced to ten thousand by his bidding those leave who are afraid, and then to three hundred by the test at the river, those being chosen who do not kneel but hastily dip up the water in the hollow of their hands. Israel must not vaunt itself and say, "Mine own hand hath saved me."

Lesson VII. Gideon and his servant Purah go stealthily to the camp of the Midianites, who lie "along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitudes." As they approach one man is telling his dream to another. He had seen a cake of barley bread roll into camp and overthrow a tent. The cake of barley bread is Gideon, a comrade interprets the dream, into whose hand God hath delivered Midian. Encouraged, Gideon returns to his three hundred and dividing them into three companies orders them to approach the Midianite camp from three sides. Each one has a trumpet and a torch concealed in a pitcher. At a signal from Gideon they all break their pitchers, flash their torches, and blow their trumpets. The bewildered enemy think themselves surrounded and in their confusion slay one another. Those who escape are closely pursued.

The Ephraimites are called on to help in routing the Midianites. The men of Succoth and Penuel refuse aid to Gideon's army, and after the victory over the Midianites Gideon destroys them. Gideon is asked to rule over the Israelites but refuses the honor saying, "The Lord shall rule over you." Abimelech by the aid of the Shechemites is made King, and after a tempestuous time is slain by a woman who hurls a millstone upon him from a tower. Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

successively judge Israel. When the Israelites are in subjection to the Philistines Samson is born, and he "begins to judge Israel." The riddle which he propounds to the young men at his marriage feast is the cause of his first trouble with the Philistines. The young men can not guess it and they induce Samson's wife to tell them. Samson fulfills his wager by killing thirty Philistines and giving their garments to the young men. Samson has may exploits. At one time he sets the corn and vineyards of his enemies on fire by tying three hundred foxes together, two by two, and firing the brand fastened between each pair of tails. At another time he bursts the cords with which the Philistines bind him when delivered to them by the men of Judah. With the jaw-bone of an ass he kills a thousand men. He walks off with the gates of a city on his shoulders, when the inhabitants think he can not escape them. To Delilah he finally says the secret of his strength lies in his long hair, the sign of his Nazarite vow, and she has his hair cut off.

Lesson IX. The Philistines now easily bind Samson, put out his eyes, and compel him to turn the mill stones in the prison house. His hair begins to grow again and with it his strength returns. The Philistines hold a great feast to their god Dagon to celebrate their victory over Samson, and they have the poor blind hero brought before them to make them sport. Samson bids the lad who leads him take him to the pillars supporting the roof of the house. With a prayer to God for strength, he takes hold of the pillars and bowing himself with all his might pulls down the roof upon himself and his enemies, burying under its ruins a greater number than all whom he slew in his lifetime.

In the appendix to the book of Judges, the last five chapters, unconnected events are recorded. The removal of part of the tribe of Dan to the foot of Mount Hermon is chronicled.

Lesson X. "In the days when the judges ruled" a famine drives a family of Bethlehem, Elimelech and his wife Naomi and their two sons, to the land of Moab. There the sons marry two women of Moab, Orpah and Ruth, and after their death and the death of their father Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem. Her daughters-in-law accompany her a short distance on her way, and she affectionately bids them return to their people, for she can not help them establish new homes in her land where, as daughters of a despised people, they would not be welcomed. Orpah kisses her mother and returns, but Ruth refuses to leave her. "Entreat me not to leave thee," she says, "for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; naught but death shall part thee and me." So together they enter Bethlehem. Naomi bids the people call her no longer Naomi, Pleasant, but Mara, Bitter, "for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with her."

It is barley harvest time, and Ruth goes forth to glean among the reapers and gain food for Naomi and herself. She goes to the field of Boaz, who, though she knows it not, is related to the family of Elimelech, and she is kindly treated. Boaz acknowledges the right and duty of a kinsman to marry Ruth, after the nearest of kin refuses. To Ruth and Boaz Obed is born, and the women of Bethlehem announce to Naomi: "Thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to

thee than seven sons, hath borne a son." The son of Obed is Jesse, who becomes the father of King David.

Lesson XI. Hannah, a devout woman, brings her son Samuel to Eli the high priest and judge at Shiloh, for she has vowed to "lend him to the Lord," and Samuel helps Eli in the services of the tabernacle. In these days the word of the Lord is seldom heard, and Samuel has never had a revelation. One night, however, he hears his name called, and supposing that Eli wishes some assistance, for he is now an old man whose eye-sight is dim, he hastens to him. Eli tells him he has not called. Again Samuel hears a voice and goes to Eli, who tells him to lie down again. When a third time Samuel goes to Eli, the latter perceives that the Lord has called him, and bids him answer the next time, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." To Samuel now is revealed God's intentions in regard to the house of Eli. His sons are very wicked and Eli fails to restrain them, but retribution is coming. In the morning, at Eli's bidding, Samuel tells him the message he received, and Eli humbly replies, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." Throughout the length and breadth of the land it becomes known that Samuel is a prophet to whom God speaks, and whose words he fulfills.

At Ebenezer the Philistines conquer the Israelites, and then the latter bring the ark with them into battle. The Philistines capture the ark, and defeat the Israelites. Eli's two sons are slain. When Eli learns what has happened he falls from his seat and breaks his neck. The ark brings calamities upon the Philistines, and after seven months they send it back with an offering to the Israelites at Beth-shemesh. The people of this city are smitten because they look into the ark, and they send to Kirjath-jearim and ask the people there to come and get it.

Lesson XII. The men of Kirjath-jearim bring the ark back and leave it in the house of Abinadab, in his son Eleazar's care. Twenty years pass, and Israel is brought to see its sins and repent. Samuel is the only strong man among them all, and he admonishes them that if they truly repent they will put away their strange gods and prepare their hearts unto the Lord and serve Him only. This the people do. Samuel summons all to Mizpeh for a religious ceremony. They pour water on the ground to symbolize that their vows can not be recalled, they fast, and Samuel prays for them. The Philistines are seen approaching for battle, and the affrighted Israelites beg Samuel to beseech God's aid. Samuel offers a burnt offering and pleads with God. God sends His thunderbolts, and the Philistines, terrified, flee. The Israelites pursue them and are victorious. Samuel erects a memorial stone which he names Ebenezer, the Stone of Help, saying "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." In the peace which follows Samuel judges Israel till King Saul is chosen, and with him a new era begins in the history of the Israelites.

A WORD PICTURE REVIEW FOR YOUNG PUPILS

Lesson I. There is a vast camp not far from a wide river. Here and there are men who seem to be giving orders to the people gathered about them. What are they saying?

Lesson II. In the middle of what was once a river stands a group of men holding something which looks like a chest. A great multitude of people is crossing from one bank to the other, and there are multitudes yet behind

them. Now I see twelve men piling stones up in a heap while the people look silently on.

Lesson III. In this scene there is a great procession. First come armed men, then men clad in white who are blowing trumpets, next come other white-robed men carrying a chest, and back of them are men who are silently following. They seem to be going around a high wall. The next time I look the wall has disappeared and the men who were in the procession are rushing over where it stood, and now there is a great fire to be seen.

Lesson IV. Two old white-haired men are talking earnestly and a group of younger men surround them. Now one of the old men holds out his hands over the other man as if he were blessing him.

Lesson V. Two men are running at full speed, and the one behind seems to be gaining on the other. Suddenly the first man turns into the gate of a city and falls exhausted in the midst of a group of men. Some of them rush out and stop the second man from entering. He is greatly excited and talks and gesticulates wildly.

Lesson VI. An aged man has been talking for some time to a great crowd of people. Now he stands beside a great stone on which his hand rests, and those near enough to see are looking earnestly at the stone.

Lesson VII. Two men are creeping along in the darkness toward a camp fire where two other men are quietly talking. The first two men listen eagerly at a little distance, and then they turn and go away quickly. A great many men are now coming along the way which the first two men came. Suddenly there is a great noise, lights flash on every side, and trumpets resound. All is confusion. A great fight is going on, and men are fleeing for their lives with others in hot pursuit.

Lesson IX. Here there are several scenes. A blind man who looks like a giant is sitting by himself and sadly turning a great stone around. People are feasting in a court, and on the roof of an immense building are great crowds of people. Now the blind giant is standing in a great building with each hand around a pillar. A little boy is crouching near, terrified at seeing the man bend his body and the pillars looking as though they were beginning to fall. In the last scene there is a great heap of ruins. Some men are carrying away the body of the giant.

Lesson X. Three women are standing by themselves earnestly talking. They seem to be far away from any city and there is no one else in sight. One of the younger women kisses the older woman affectionately, and sadly turns and walks slowly away. The other young woman is talking, and now they both go on together.

Lesson XI. A young boy is asleep, but as we look he suddenly awakes and jumping up hastens to the bedside of an old man. Three times we see him do this, and then he remains sitting on his bed eagerly looking upward as though he were listening to some one. Now it is morning and the young boy is talking to the old man, who looks very sad.

Lesson XII. At first I see some men going slowly up a hill carrying something very carefully. Next there is a vast meeting out of doors. One man is pouring something on the ground, and another man is praying. An army is approaching and a terrible thunderstorm suddenly rages. The army is fleeing in a panic and the men whom we saw assembled are hastening after them.

OUTLINE OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS

I. The Conquest of Canaan.

1. The new leader.
2. The crossing of the Jordan.
3. The capture of Jericho.
4. The allotment of the land.
5. The cities of refuge.
6. The covenant renewed.

II. The Period of the Judges.

7. Gideon.
9. Samson.
10. Ruth.
11. Samuel the prophet.
12. Samuel the judge.

A BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Titles	Outlines	Lessons.
1. Joshua Israel's New Leader.	God's word. Gracious promise. Good counsel. Go over Jordan.	I will not fail In My care If thou art faithful In thy obedience.
2. Israel enters the Land of Promise.	Sanctify yourselves. Sacred ark. Safe passage.	We believe in God Who hath power to Work miracles.
3. The Capture of Jericho.	Encompassing the city. Explicit obedience. Extraordinary result.	Righteous faith in the Ruling God is Rewarded.
4. Caleb's Faithfulness Rewarded.	Caleb's claim. Conscientious report. Coveted task.	Faithfulness over a Few things deserves Further tasks.
5. The Cities of Refuge.	Blameless slayer. Blood avenger. Befriending cities.	My refuge Must be sought in My God.
6. Joshua Renewing the Covenant with Israel.	Serve God. Solemn vow. Stone of witness.	So must we Say whom we will Serve.

7. Gideon and the Three Hundred.	Surprising dream. Strategy of Gideon. Sword of the Lord. Successful attack.	Fear not For the Lord will Fight For you.
8. World's Temperance Lesson.	Do not judge. Distress not others. Drink not. Defy not conscience.	Let us not Lay stumbling blocks A- Long our Life's pathway.
9. The Death of Samson.	Pitiful giant. Prayer for power. Pillars overthrown.	True strength Trusts in God's might To give true power.
10. Ruth's Wise Choice.	Loving counsel. Loving words. Loving service.	Thy people shall in Truth be my people and Thy God my God.
11. The Boy Samuel.	Strange call. Solemn message. Sacred prophet.	Let us Listen for the Lord's voice.
12. Samuel The Upright Judge.	Ark returned. Accusing conscience. Assembly at Mizpeh. Assistance of God.	Prepare your hearts to Praise God and Profess His goodness And Power.

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER PUPILS

Where did Moses die? Who took his place? What promise made to Moses did God renew to Joshua? What did He direct him to do? What command did Joshua give his officers?

When the priests took up the ark and stepped into the river what happened? Where did they go? How long did they stay there? What did twelve men do? What was this for? What happened when the priests and the ark reached the other side of the river?

What was the first city the Israelites captured beyond the Jordan? What surrounded the city? Describe the procession that marched around it. How many days did they go around Jericho? How many times on the last day? What command did Joshua give at the end. What happened then?

What request did Caleb make of Joshua? What reason did he give for this? How had he shown his loyalty to God? What had the other spies said? What special reason had he for wanting Hebron?

How many cities of refuge were chosen? How many were west of the Jordan? For whose benefit were these cities? What happened to a fugitive who did not reach a city of refuge? If received in the city how long was he obliged to stay there?

What choice did Joshua give the people in regard to whom they would

serve? What did he say he should do? What did the people say was their choice? How often did they make their solemn vow? What sin had they often committed which Joshua told them they must give up? What did Joshua declare to be a witness of their vow?

How did it happen that Gideon heard a dream told in the camp of the Midianites? What was the dream and its explanation? What did this show to Gideon? Why had he so few men? How did he make his attack? What was the result?

How did Samson differ from other men? What wonderful feats of strength did he perform? What did the Philistines at last succeed in doing to him? How did they celebrate their victory? Why did they send for Samson? What did he do?

Why had Naomi and her family left Bethlehem? Why did she return? Who went with her a little way? What did she advise them to do? Which daughter returned to her house? How did Ruth show her love for her mother? What did she say to her? How did she work to get food for her on reaching Bethlehem? Whom did she marry? What great King was her great grandson?

What young boy helped a high priest in the services of the tabernacle? Who was the high priest? Why did Samuel think Eli called him one night? How often did Samuel go to him? Whose voice did Eli tell him he had heard? What message came to him? How did the people regard Samuel?

What sin did Samuel tell the Israelites they must give up? At Mizpeh what did Samuel do? Who came to attack the Israelites? How did the people feel? Who aided them? How? What office did Samuel hold after this?

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OLDER PUPILS

What was Moses' highest title? Did Joshua ever receive the same title? What is the meaning of the name Joshua? What was the extent of the Promised Land as given in the first chapter of Joshua? What were the words of counsel that came to Joshua when he took up Moses' work? What was to be his guide-book on the way?

In what way was the faith of Joshua and of the people tried? Describe the crossing of the Jordan. What later prophet crossed the Jordan at this place on dry ground?

Why was it necessary for the Israelites to capture Jericho? Describe the manner in which the city was taken. Why was Rahab's life spared? What justifies the total destruction of the inhabitants? In which event, the capture of Jericho or the crossing of the Jordan, was greater faith required?

Tell the story of the twelve spies sent into Canaan, their report, and the result. How long was this before Caleb made his request of Joshua for an inheritance in Canaan? On what grounds did he prefer his request? Was he justified in making his statements about himself?

What was the custom in regard to avenging a murder? For what reasons was the office of the go-el necessary for the times we are considering? For what purpose were the cities of refuge appointed? Where were they located? Tell how an innocent manslayer secured safety in one of these cities.

What counsel did Joshua give the people at Shechem? What was the reply he received? How did he seek to impress them with the full meaning of

their promise? What did he command them to do? How did he show that he was not very sanguine about their keeping their promise? What memorial of the covenant did he erect? What other covenants have been included in our lessons this year?

How did Gideon receive his call? What signs proved to him that God would be with him in his mission? Why was his first army too large? How was it reduced? Why was he so encouraged by the dream he heard interpreted in the Midianite camp? Why were the Midianites so easily routed?

What was the Nazarite vow? What did Samson accomplish with his marvelous strength? What was the condition of the Israelites at this period? What was Samson's motive in his death?

Describe Naomi's going to Moab and her return. Repeat Ruth's words to her on their way back. How did Ruth win the regard of the people of Bethlehem? What great honor was hers?

What does the name Samuel mean? Give the circumstances of Samuel's call. What was Eli's character? How did he bear the message given him by Samuel? How was it fulfilled? What was Samuel's office?

Why was the ark brought to Kirjath-jearim? What counsel did Samuel give the people? Where did he call an assemblage? For what purpose? What took place there? How were the Philistines routed? On what occasions were memorial stones erected? What did Samuel do as judge? What ended the period of the judges?

How many years passed between the crossing of the Jordan and the erecting of the stone at Ebenezer? (See the dates on the margins of your Bible.) How far back in the history of our own country would three hundred and fifty years carry us?

SUBJECTS FOR A WRITTEN REVIEW

1. An Appreciation of Joshua.
2. A Life of Caleb.
3. A Life of Gideon.
4. A Life of Samson.
5. A Life of Ruth.
6. An Appreciation of Samuel.
7. A Comparison of the Crossing of the Red Sea and of the Jordan.
8. The Great Battles in the Conquest of Canaan.
9. The Way in which God's Goodness to His people is shown in Each Lesson.
10. The Religious Lessons of the Period of the Judges.

A GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

Have a map of Palestine drawn on the blackboard or on a large pad of paper, and as each lesson is reviewed locate the places where the events occurred.

By questions review the geography of the period of the conquest of Canaan and of the time of the Judges.

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